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ENGLISH ODES.

PINDAR

ENGLISH ODES

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INTRODUCTION.

IT is from the triumphal poems of Pindar that we receive the impression that an ode must belong to an enthusiastic and elevated order of writing. There is nothing in Greek literature to warrant this supposition; an ode, ᾠδή, from ᾄδω, to sing, was simply a chant, a poem arranged to be sung to an instrumental accompaniment. The origin of Greek versification is a subject attended with great difficulty and not a little uncertainty, but the consensus of the best scholarship is in favour of a very rapid development from the earliest form of strophe, the regular distich, to the complete poem. Archilochus, it would seem, set lyrical poetry in movement by giving elegiac variety to the distich, and by expanding it into an ode. Alcman went further still, and was the first to gather together his diffuse numbers into an elaborate *carmen*, or ode. The form of lyric verse so invented took two directions. In the hands of Sappho and Alcæus it became moulded into certain simple, but highly-wrought, melodic systems, and grew simpler still as it passed to Anacreon and the lesser Æolian poets. This slighter form of ode is what we generally call the Horatian, because the Greek

originals, which are known to us only in fragments, were familiar to Horace, and by him affectionately studied and revived. On the other hand, a Dorian poet, Stesichorus, improved on the ode of Alcman by elaborating a triple movement, *strophe* answered by *antistrophe* and concluded by the *epode*. Simonides went further still, and adapted this elaborate ode-form to the newly-invented Dorian music, which Terpander and the other Lesbian musicians had created by grafting their soft Lydian airs upon the rough stock of Doric popular melodies. No sooner had the musical and poetical art of Greece thus reached its perfection, than Pindar arrived with his incomparable genius, to exercise it in all its grace and all its majesty. It is incorrect to think of a Greek ode without remembering that it was always accompanied by that "virile Dorian harmony," of which Plato speaks in the *Laches*, the first tones of which set the blood of the athlete fleeting through his veins, and nerved his whole body with ambition.

The character and form of the ode depended on the musical accompaniment, although this was always subsidiary to the poetry in volume. Pindar speaks in one place of a new sort of music invented for the ode in hand Most odes were fitted for both wind and stringed instruments ; etiquette stepped in and provided the flute alone in hymns to Cybele, and nothing but the majestic phorminx when Apollo was celebrated. When the poem wa

to be chanted in a moving procession, the epode seems to have been omitted. But of the ode as written in its full variety by its greatest master, we can do little but conjecture. Pindar's *partheneia*, or odes for virgins, his *skolia*, or genuine dithyrambic odes in praise of Dionysos, his encomiastic odes, and all his other lyrical repertory, have perished, and we only possess some of his *epinikia*, or triumphal odes. These are all written in elaborate measures, infinitely varied in their stateliness or volubility, and each the result of a separate act of metrical ingenuity, but each preserving, within itself, an absolute consistency of form. The odes of Pindar, so far from being, as used to be supposed, utterly licentious in their irregularity, are more like the *canzos* and *sirventes* of the mediæval Troubadours than any modern verse. In each case the apparent looseness and actual rigidity of form depend upon the exigencies of the music, which strained the poet's art to its utmost, yet never released him from its bondage.

At the revival of learning the rules of Greek versification were very dimly understood, or not understood at all, except where they were illustrated by Roman practice. Hence the humanist poets contented themselves with writing odes, even in Greek, in those simpler Æolian measures, the form of which Catullus and Horace had clearly taught them. Pindar was recovered, indeed, but recovered in such confusion that it was left for Boeckh, a scholar of the present century, to unwind

his tangled strophes and antistrophes. In the living languages, Italian was already well provided with stately lyrical forms of verse, the heritage to her of the Middle Ages, and it was in French that the first modern odes were written. In 1550 Ronsard published his original collection, with a quaint essay, in which he distinctly pointed to Pindar and the Greeks as the source of his inspiration. His odes, indeed, are singularly correct, and even monotonous, in form; strophe, antistrophe and epode following in due order, without attention to what is almost as important, the variation of the length of different lines in each stanza. Having justified, however, by fifteen of these regular pieces, his determination to show "le moyen de suivre Pindare," he lapsed into indolence for the rest of his life, and wrote reams of poems that were only "odes" by critical courtesy. His laxity, not his learning, was imitated by various lyrists of the French decadence down to J. J. Rousseau and Escouchard-Lebrun.

Before considering the history of this form of verse in the country which most has fostered it since the Renaissance, it will be well to state what has been understood to constitute an ode, and what has been the principle of the present selection. There are many sweet and tuneful compositions in English literature which were called "odes" by their writers, but which scarcely claim a place in our garland. Of these the elegant lines, begin-

ing "As it fell upon a day," of which Barnfield was so ong defrauded by the editors of Shakespeare, form an xcellent example. Where the Lydian has so far out-rilled the Dorian harmony as in this case, it has not een thought proper to include the poem. We take as n ode any strain of enthusiastic and exalted lyrical erse, directed to a fixed purpose, and dealing pro-ressively with one dignified theme. The sole apparent xception, the humorous ode of Prior, is not really an xception, for this poem, in ridiculing the bombastic omp of Boileau, acknowledges that such pomp is proper o an ode under suitable circumstances. It has been ound impossible to admit the elegy, or funeral ode, xcept in two instances, those written by Dryden "To ie Pious Memory of Mrs. Anne Killigrew," and by 'ennyson "On the Death of the Duke of Wellington," here the character of the poems seemed, upon reflec-on, to be encomiastic rather than elegiacal. Of the ithalamium, or marriage ode, only one example has een given, but that the most sublime that occurs in this, perhaps in any language.

It is difficult to say whether we owe this exquisite hapsody to the Greek or to the Italian side of the genius f Edmund Spenser; the poem is unique, and had no lerable imitators. The importer of the ode as we usually nderstand it was Ben Jonson, whose strong and manly erse, sounding with a rude directness amid the lovely

chorus of the euphuists, — for what was Shakespeare himself but the greatest of all possible euphuists?—fell naturally into rigid Latin forms. Where his strenuous genius had proceeded, though somewhat stiffly, proved too dense a medium for the steps of his disciples. The odes of Herrick and his compeers lack shape and grace, they move with a series of painful jerks, and cannot be profitably revived in such a collection as the present. It would be gratifying, for instance, to reprint an ode like the *Mildreiados* of Quarles, if only to rescue from oblivion such a strophe as this :—

O but this light is out! what wakeful eye
E'er marked the progress of the Queen of Light,
Robed with full glory in her austrian sky
Until at length, in her young noon of night,
A swart, tempestuous cloud doth rise and rise,
And hides her lustre from our darkened sight:
Even so too early Death, that has no ears
Open to suits, in her scarce noon of years,
Dashed out her light and left the tempest of our tears.

But the poet cannot be trusted: we glance across the page and find :—

Ladies, let not your emulous stomachs swell
To hear perfection crowned.

The only ode by a "son" of Ben Jonson which preserves throughout a Latin dignity of style, is that by Randolph to Sir Anthony Stafford.

The style of Milton, no less than his soul, was "like a star and dwelt apart." His unrivalled odes were like

ose octaves, of which aurists tell us, which exist indeed,
t are wound too high to stir the auditory nerve. They
d no influence whatever till Gray appeared, their full
fluence was not exercised until Shelley began to write.
he ear of the seventeenth century, too dull to catch the
rmonies of Milton, was profoundly moved by the coarser
nes of Cowley; and this remarkable poet, and still more
markable rhetorician, produced, by an error in criticism,
whole class of poetry which flourished more or less
gorously almost until our own times. While he was in
ile with the Royalist court in France, he chanced to be
a place where the only book was a Pindar, which he
ad with eagerness. It was printed, of course, with no
oral divisions; and in the old metrical confusion, and
an observer so little perspicacious as Cowley, the odes
emed to be fashioned in absolute irregularity. He had
ng practised the Horatian ode, and now he was fired
imitate the Pindaric, that being as he conceived "the
blest and highest kind of writing in verse;" but he
d so by merely giving a loose external semblance of
ndar's elaborate compositions, without grasping, or
en attempting to emulate, the structure of the Greek
ophe, antistrophe, and epode. His great contempo-
ries—even those who assisted him in remodelling our
etry—refrained from imitating though they profusely
mired these shapeless pieces of Cowley's; but before
died, two very dissimilar persons, Norris of Bemerton

and the Matchless Orinda, adopted the Pindaric form all its triviality and uncouthness, but without any of tho occasional trumpet-notes that had redeemed the langu of Cowley. And no sooner was he dead, than it becan accepted almost to the exclusion of all other lyric forms of verse, and even Dryden was distinctly affecte by it.

As employed by Lord Orrery, Aphra Behn, and the fellows, it became an instrument, the excessive facility which, in untrained hands, was bewildering and blindi to the criticism of the day. In 1688, Shadwell, the ne poet laureate, adopted it as the form of those anniversa pieces by virtue of which he justified his office, and tl Pindaric ode remained the recognized costume in whi a poet must approach his monarch until Southey w permitted to divest himself of these laurels in 181 Meanwhile, about one hundred and twenty royal od had been written, of which not one is a readable, or eve a tolerable, composition.

Outside the official circle, the Pindaric ode scarce fell so low, but its utterances at the best were rath grotesque. Perhaps the very best example writte between Dryden and Gray is not Pope's on "Sai Cecilia's Day," a poem all sound and fury, signifyi scarcely anything at all, but Congreve's "On Mr Arabella Hunt, singing." Compared, not with the rich poetry of a later age, but with the verse of its own tas

time, it is of an extraordinary merit. The opening the closing lines need no apology; they are of a very h order of lyrical rhetoric; and if we smile at the on of Silence, we must at least admit that the descrip- of it is ingenious and vivacious, and as exactly in spirit of the age as any one of Thornhill's painted ings.

he name of Congreve must be lightly dismissed by one who essays to write on English odes. When he reached his thirty-fifth year, and to the deep injury literature had persuaded himself to retire from its ctice almost entirely, he came across an edition of dar, and discovered, for the first time, the metrical et that had evaded Cowley and all his successors. l of whimsical remorse for the shapeless pieces that himself had written, he fell to the composition of odes were as nearly as possible faultless in form, the iest written in English with the due distinction of phe, antistrophe and epode; and more interesting still, ublished "A Discourse on the Pindarique Ode," in 5, which is so sound and refined that it may well take lace as the finest fragment of poetical criticism that Augustan age has left us. This essay has fallen into re oblivion; even when it was published it passed ve the heads of readers accustomed to a more rough declamatory style of analysis, and the only result it luced was that Ambrose Philips modelled his odes

on the true Greek manner Congreve recommend
Then the tide of slovenly Pindarism swept them b
away.

Twenty years later Edward Young made an atter
to reform the English ode, which was as grotes
as Congreve's had been scholarly. The author of
"Night Thoughts," in a ridiculous "Discourse on Od
recommended the substitution of a fixed stanza for
irregular strophes of Cowley, and himself employed t
new form in a series of odes. His reform was recei
with peals of laughter, and it may even now be amus
to review what so solemn a writer considered would
the best way of enshrining sublime thought in maje
harmony:—

Our Monarch, there,
Raised high in air,
Should tempests rise, disdains to bend;
Like British oak,
Derides the stroke;
His blooming honours far extend!
Beneath them lies,
With lifted eyes,
Fair Albion, like an amorous maid;
While interest wings
Bold foreign kings
To fly, like eagles, to his shade:
At his proud foot
The sea poured out,
Immortal nourishment supplies;
Thence wealth, and state,
And power, and fate,
Which Europe reads in George's eyes.

he reform which Congreve had vainly attempted was in motion forty years later by a forgotten writer, ert West, son of the editor of Pindar, who in 1749 ught out a translation of the odes of the great Theban, ded into strophes, though with much more internal gularity of form than Pindar, or even Congreve, had nitted. This version reaching the hands of Gray, had already composed a number of mellifluous odes ne Horatian manner, fired him with the design of re-lucing these forms in original English verse; and to circumstance, no doubt, we owe "The Progress of sy," 1754, and "The Bard," 1756, the only Pindaric s of Gray, but these the most famous in our language. early as 1747, Collins had published that slender ection which represents the Æolian harmony as racteristically as Gray's odes do the Dorian; and to own day these two poets are held in some sort nsors to this enthusiastic species of composition, ch, but for them, would hardly have been permitted old rank in our poetry. The irregularities of Gray surpassed the laxity permitted by Gilbert West, in the hands of his disciples the ode began return to the chaos in which Cowley left it. The tere poet of "The Pleasures of the Imagination" ored it to order, and produced a series of odes which ne nearer to the Greek model in form than any that been or have since been composed. Unfortunately

the correctness of Akenside did not insure his inspirat
That delicate sculpturesque grace which adorns his
rhymed pieces gives place in most of these odes t
chilly, constrained, and painful rhetoric. The ode
Collins, Gray, and Akenside had severally conceived
became a very popular form of verse until the clos
the eighteenth century, and proved a great snare to
persons of a pompous and bombastic habit. Twice
least, by Sir C. Hanbury Williams and by Dr. Wol
it was used in burlesque as a trenchant weapon of offen
satire.

With the romantic revival, the serious ode becam
less elaborate and sedate instrument in the hands o
warmer generation of poets. All attempt to restrai
within the exact bounds of Greek tradition was abandon
and the odes of Wordsworth and Coleridge are as
solutely irregular as Cowley's own. When Shelley ca
to write his "Ode to Naples," the very meaning of
terminology had been so far forgotten, that he commen
with two epodes, passed on to two strophes, and th
indulged in four successive antistrophes! Keats resol
the ode into a group of stanzas, each exactly follow
the preceding, and each more or less like one movem
of an ode of Pindar, but without any attempt to reprod
the choral interchanges. In our own day, little has b
attempted in this enthusiastic style, except by th
poets. Mr. Tennyson, besides a fantastic piece of mel

his rich early manner, has produced in his maturity ne noble ode, a poem that stirs all English pulses like a umpet. Mr. Coventry Patmore has published a volume of les, full of austere feeling and fine imagination, although, it appears to me, constructed rather upon a musical an a metrical system. Mr. Swinburne is marked out his fiery and transcendental temperament to excel in e fuller Dorian numbers. His best choral writing, wever, is to be found in his unequalled drama of Erechtheus," and is therefore placed outside the range this discussion. But the glowing stanzas addressed to ictor Hugo in exile, are amply sufficient to close with gnity the diapason of English odes, a music like that of hich Thomson speaks,

A broad majestic stream, and rolling on
Thro' all the winding harmony of sound.

EDMUND W. GOSSE.

EPITHALAMION.

SPENSER.

Written for the poet's own wedding-day, June 11, 1594, *and published in a volume, which also contained the "Amoretti," in* 1595.

YE learned sisters, which have oftentimes
Been to the aiding, others to adorn,
Whom ye thought worthy of your graceful rhymes,
That even the greatest did not greatly scorn
To hear their names sung in your simple lays,
But joyed in their praise;
And when ye list your own mishaps to mourn,
Which death, or love, or fortune's wreck did raise,
Your string could soon to sadder tenor turn,
And teach the woods and waters to lament
Your doleful dreriment:
Now lay those sorrowful complaints aside;
And having all your heads with girlands crowned,
Help me mine own love's praises to resound;
Ne let the same of any be envide:
So Orpheus did for his own bride,
So I unto my self alone will sing;
The woods shall to me answer, and my echo ring.

Early, before the world's light-giving lamp
His golden beam upon the hills doth spread,
Having disperst the night's uncheerful damp,
Do ye awake ; and with fresh lustihed
Go to the bower of my beloved love,
My truest turtle-dove :
Bid her awake ; for Hymen is awake,
And long since ready forth his mask to move,
With his bright tead that flames with many a flake,
And many a bachelor to wait on him,
In their fresh garments trim.
Bid her awake therefore, and soon her dight,
For lo ! the wished day is come at last,
That shall for all the pains and sorrows past
Pay to her usury of long delight :
And, whilst she doth her dight,
Do ye to her of joy and solace sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Bring with you all the Nymphs that you can hear
Both of the rivers and the forests green,
And of the sea that neighbours to her near ;
All with gay girlands goodly well beseen.
And let them also with them bring in hand
Another gay girland,
For my fair love, of lilies and of roses,
Bound truelove-wise, with a blue silk riband.

And let them make great store of bridal posies,
And let them eke bring store of other flowers,
To deck the bridal bowers.
And let the ground whereas her foot shall tread,
For fear the stones her tender foot should wrong,
Be strewed with fragrant flowers all along,
And diapred like the discoloured mead.
Which done, do at her chamber door await,
For she will waken straight,
The whiles do ye this song unto her sing;
The woods shall to you answer and your echo ring.

Ye Nymphs of Mulla, which with careful heed
The silver scaly trouts do tend full well,
And greedy pikes which use therein to feed;
Those trouts and pikes all others do excel;)
And ye likewise, which keep the rushy lake
Where none do fishes take,
Bind up the locks the which hang scattered light,
And in his waters, which your mirror make,
Behold your faces as the crystal bright,
That when you come whereas my love doth lie,
No blemish she may spy.
And eke, ye lightfoot maids, which keep the door,
That on the hoary mountain use to tower,
And the wild wolves which seek them to devour,
With your steel darts do chase from coming near;

Be also present here,
To help to deck her, and to help to sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Wake now, my love, awake ! for it is time ;
The rosy Morn long since left Tithon's bed,
All ready to her silver coach to clime ;
And Phœbus gins to shew his glorious head.
Hark ! how the cheerful birds do chaunt their lays,
And carol of love's praise.
The merry lark her matins sings aloft ;
The thrush replies ; the mavis descant plays ;
The ouzel shrills ; the ruddock warbles soft ;
So goodly all agree with sweet consent
To this day's merriment.
Ah ! my dear love, why do ye sleep thus long,
When meeter were that ye should now awake,
T' await the coming of your joyous make,
And hearken to the birds love-learned song,
The dewy leaves among ?
For they of joy and pleasance to you sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

My love is now awake out of her dream,
And her fair eyes, like stars that dimmed were
With darksome cloud, now shew their goodly beams
More bright then Hesperus his head doth rear.

Come now, ye damsels, daughters of delight,
Help quickly her to dight:
But first come, ye fair hours, which were begot,
In Jove's sweet paradise, of Day and Night;
Which do the seasons of the year allot,
And all that ever in this world is fair
Do make and still repair:
And ye three handmaids of the Cyprian Queen,
The which do still adorn her beauty's pride,
Help to adorn my beautifullest bride:
And, as ye her array, still throw between
Some graces to be seen;
And, as ye use to Venus, to her sing,
The whiles the woods shall answer, and your echo ring.

Now is my love all ready forth to come:
Let all the virgins therefore well await;
And ye fresh boys, that tend upon her groom,
Prepare yourselves, for he is coming straight.
Set all your things in seemly good array,
Fit for so joyful day:
The joyfulst day that ever Sun did see.
Fair Sun! shew forth thy favourable ray,
And let thy lifeful heat not fervent be,
For fear of burning her sunshiny face,
Her beauty to disgrace.
O fairest Phœbus! father of the Muse!

If ever I did honour thee aright,
Or sing the thing that mote thy mind delight,
Do not thy servant's simple boon refuse ;
But let this day, let this one day, be mine ;
Let all the rest be thine :
Then I thy sovereign praises loud will sing,
That all the woods shall answer, and their echo ring

Hark ! how the minstrels gin to shrill aloud
Their merry music that resounds from far,
The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling crowd,
That well agree withouten breach or jar.
But most of all the damsels do delight,
When they their timbrels smite,
And thereunto do dance and carol sweet,
That all the senses they do ravish quite ;
The whiles the boys run up and down the street,
Crying aloud with strong confused noise,
As if it were one voice,
Hymen ! io Hymen ! Hymen ! they do shout ;
That even to the heavens their shouting shrill
Doth reach, and all the firmament doth fill :
To which the people standing all about,
As in approvance, do thereto applaud,
And loud advance her laud ;
And evermore they Hymen, Hymen, sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring

Lo! where she comes along with portly pace,
Like Phœbe, from her chamber of the East,
Arising forth to run her mighty race,
Clad all in white, that seems a virgin best.
So well it her beseems, that ye would ween
Some angel she had been.
Her long loose yellow locks like golden wire,
Sprinkled with pearl, and pearling flowers a-tween,
Do like a golden mantle her attire;
And being crowned with a girland green,
Seem like some maiden queen.
Her modest eyes, abashed to behold
So many gazers as on her do stare,
Upon the lowly ground affixed are;
Ne dare lift up her countenance too bold,
But blush to hear her praises sung so loud,
So far from being proud.
Nathless, do ye still loud her praises sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Tell me, ye merchants' daughters, did ye see
So fair a creature in your town before,
So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she,
Adorned with beauty's grace and virtue's store?
Her goodly eyes like sapphires shining bright,
Her forehead ivory white,
Her cheeks like apples which the sun hath rudded,

Her lips like cherries charming men to bite,
Her breast like to a bowl of cream uncrudded,
Her paps like lilies budded,
Her snowy neck like to a marble tower;
And all her body like a palace fair,
Ascending up, with many a stately stair,
To honour's seat and chastity's sweet bower.
Why stand ye still, ye virgins, in amaze
Upon her so to gaze,
Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,
To which the woods did answer, and your echo ring?

But if ye saw that which no eyes can see,
The inward beauty of her lively spright,
Garnisht with heavenly gifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
And stand astonisht like to those which read
Medusa's mazeful head.
There dwells sweet love, and constant chastity,
Unspotted faith, and comely womanhood,
Regard of honour, and mild modesty;
There virtue reigns as queen in royal throne,
And giveth laws alone,
To which the base affections do obey,
And yield their services unto her will;
Ne thought of things uncomely ever may
Thereto approach to tempt her mind to ill.

Had ye once seen these her celestial treasures,
And unrevealed pleasures,
Then would ye wonder, and her praises sing,
That all the woods should answer, and your echo ring.

Open the temple-gates unto my love!
Open them wide that she may enter in,
And all the posts adorn as doth behove,
And all the pillars deck with girlands trim,
For to receive this Saint with honour due
That cometh in to you.
With trembling steps, and humble reverence,
She cometh in before th' Almighty's view.
Of her, ye virgins, learn obedience,
When so ye come into those holy places,
To humble your proud faces.
Bring her up to th' high altar, that she may
The sacred ceremonies there partake,
The which do endless matrimony make;
And let the roaring organs loudly play
The praises of the Lord in lively notes;
The whiles, with hollow throats,
The choristers the joyous anthem sing,
That all the woods may answer, and their echo ring.

Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
And blesseth her with his two happy hands,

How the red roses flush up in her cheeks,
And the pure snow, with goodly vermil stain,
Like crimson dyed in grain;
That even the angels, which continually
About the sacred altar do remain,
Forget their service and about her fly,
Oft peeping in her face, that seems more fair,
The more they on it stare.
But her sad eyes, still fastened on the ground,
Are governed with goodly modesty,
That suffers not one look to glance awry,
Which may let in a little thought unsound.
Why blush ye, love, to give to me your hand
The pledge of all our band?
Sing, ye sweet angels, Alleluia sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Now all is done: bring home the Bride again;
Bring home the triumph of our victory;
Bring home with you the glory of her gain,
With joyance bring her and with jollity.
Never had man more joyful day than this,
Whom heaven would heap with bliss.
Make feast therefore now all this live-long day;
This day for ever to me holy is.
Pour out the wine without restraint or stay,
Pour not by cups, but by the bellyful,

Pour out to all that wull,
And sprinkle all the posts and walls with wine,
That they may sweat, and drunken be withal.
Crown ye God Bacchus with a coronal,
And Hymen also crown with wreaths of vine;
And let the Graces dance unto the rest,
For they can do it best:
The whiles the maidens do their carol sing,
To which the woods shall answer, and their echo ring.

Ring ye the bells, ye young men of the town,
And leave your wonted labours for this day:
This day is holy; do ye write it down,
That ye for ever it remember may.
This day the sun is in his chiefest height,
With Barnaby the bright,
From whence declining daily by degrees,
He somewhat loseth of his heat and light,
When once the Crab behind his back he sees.
But for this time it ill-ordained was,
To choose the longest day in all the year,
And shortest night, when longest fitter were:
Yet never day so long but late would pass.
Ring ye the bells, to make it wear away,
And bonfires make all day;
And dance about them, and about them sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Ah! when will this long weary day have end,
And lend me leave to come unto my love?
How slowly do the hours their numbers spend;
How slowly does sad Time his feathers move!
Haste thee, O fairest Planet! to thy home
Within the western foam:
Thy tired steeds long since have need of rest.
Long though it be, at last I see it gloom,
And the bright evening star with golden crest
Appear out of the East.
Fair child of beauty! glorious lamp of love!
That all the host of heaven in ranks dost lead,
And guidest lovers through the night's sad dread,
How cheerfully thou lookest from above,
And seemst to laugh atween thy twinkling light,
As joying in the sight
Of these glad many, which for joy do sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

Now cease, ye damsels, your delights forepast;
Enough is it that all the day was yours:
Now day is done, and night is nighing fast,
Now bring the Bride into the bridal bowers.
The night is come, now soon her disarray,
And in her bed her lay;
Lay her in lilies and in violets,
And silken curtains over her display,

And odour'd sheets, and arras coverlets.
Behold how goodly my fair love does lie,
In proud humility!
Like unto Maia, when as Jove her took
In Tempe, lying on the flowery grass,
Twixt sleep and wake, after she weary was,
With bathing in the Acidalian brook.
Now it is night, ye damsels may be gone,
And leave my love alone;
And leave likewise your former lay to sing:
The woods no more shall answer, nor your echo ring.

Now welcome, night! thou night so long expected,
That long day's labour dost at last defray,
And all my cares, which cruel love collected,
Hast summed in one, and cancelled for aye:
Spread thy broad wing over my love and me,
That no man may us see;
And in thy sable mantle us enwrap,
From fear of peril and foul horror free.
Let no false treason seek us to entrap,
Nor any dread disquiet once annoy
The safety of our joy;
But let the night be calm and quietsome,
Without tempestuous storms or sad affray:
Like as when Jove with fair Alcmena lay,
When he begot the great Tirynthian groom:

Or like as when he with thyself did lie,
And begot Majesty.
And let the maids and young men cease to sing;
Ne let the woods them answer, nor their echo ring.

Let no lamenting cries, nor doleful tears,
Be heard all night within, nor yet without:
Ne let false whispers, breeding hidden fears,
Break gentle sleep with misconceived doubt.
Let no deluding dreams, nor dreadful sights,
Make sudden sad affrights;
Ne let housefires, nor lightning's helpless harms,
Ne let the pouke, nor other evil sprights,
Ne let mischievous witches with their charms,
Ne let hobgoblins, names whose sense we see not,
Fray us with things that be not;
Let not the screech owl, not the stork, be heard;
Nor the night-raven, that still deadly yells;
Nor damned ghosts, called up with mighty spells;
Nor griesly vultures make us once affeard:
Ne let th' unpleasant choir of frogs still croking
Make us to wish their choking.
Let none of these their dreary accents sing;
Ne let the woods them answer, nor their echo ring.

But let still silence true night-watches keep,
That sacred peace may in assurance reign,

And timely sleep, when it is time to sleep,
May pour his limbs forth on your pleasant plain ;
The whiles an hundred little winged loves,
Like divers feathered doves,
Shall fly and flutter round about the bed,
And in the secret dark, that none reproves,
Their pretty stealths shall work, and snares shall spread
To filch away sweet snatches of delight,
Concealed through covert night.
Ye sons of Venus, play your sports at will ;
For greedy pleasure, careless of your toys
Thinks more upon her paradise of joys,
Then what ye do, albeit good or ill.
All night therefore attend your merry play,
For it will soon be day :
Now none doth hinder you, that say or sing ;
Ne will the woods now answer, nor your echo ring.

Who is the same, which at my window peeps,
Or whose is that fair face that shines so bright ?
Is it not Cynthia, she that never sleeps,
But walks about high heaven all the night ?
O, fairest goddess ! do thou not envy
My Love with me to spy ;
For thou likewise didst love, though now unthought,
And for a fleece of wool, which privily
The Latmian shepherd once unto thee brought,

His pleasures with thee wrought.
Therefore to us be favourable now ;
And sith of women's labours thou hast charge,
And generation goodly dost enlarge,
Incline thy will t' effect our wishful vow,
And the chaste womb inform with timely seed,
That may our comfort breed :
Till which we cease our hopeful hap to sing ;
Ne let the woods us answer, nor our echo ring.

And thou, great Juno, which with awful might
The laws of wedlock still dost patronise,
And the religion of the faith first plight
With sacred rites hast taught to solemnise ;
And eke for comfort often called art
Of women in their smart ;
Eternally bind thou this lovely band,
And all thy blessings unto us impart.
And thou, glad Genius, in whose gentle hand
The bridal bower and genial bed remain,
Without blemish or stain ;
And the sweet pleasures of their love's delight
With secret aid dost succour and supply,
Till they bring forth the fruitful progeny ;
Send us the timely fruit of this same night :
And thou, fair Hebe, and thou, Hymen free,
Grant that it may so be !

Till which we cease your further praise to sing ;
Ne any woods shall answer, nor your echo ring.

And ye high heavens, the temple of the gods,
In which a thousand torches flaming bright
Do burn, that to us wretched earthly clods
In dreadful darkness lend desired light ;
And all ye powers which in the same remain,
More than we men can feign,
Pour out your blessing on us plenteously,
And happy influence upon us rain,
That we may raise a large posterity,
Which from the earth, which they may long possess
With lasting happiness,
Up to your haughty palaces may mount :
And, for the guerdon of their glorious merit,
May heavenly tabernacles there inherit,
Of blessed Saints for to increase the count.
So let us rest, sweet Love, in hope of this,
And cease till then our timely joys to sing,
The woods no more us answer, nor our echo ring.

Song ! made in lieu of many ornaments,
With which my love should duly have been decked,
Which cutting off through hasty accidents,

Ye would not stay your due time to expect,
But promist both to recompence ;
Be unto her a goodly ornament,
And for short time an endless monument !

TO HIMSELF.

Occasioned by the failure of the "New Inn," a comedy "never acted, but most negligently played by some, the King's Servants; and more squeamishly beheld and censured by others, the King's subjects," Jan. 19, 1629. *The ode was appended to the 4to. of* 1631.

COME, leave the loathèd stage,
And the more loathsome age;
Where pride and impudence, in faction knit,
Usurp the chair of wit!
Indicting and arraigning every day
Something they call a play.
Let their fastidious, vain
Commission of the brain
Run on and rage, sweat, censure, and condemn;
They were not made for thee, less thou for them.

Say that thou pour'st them wheat,
And they will acorns eat;
'Twere simple fury still thyself to waste
On such as have no taste!
To offer them a surfeit of pure bread
Whose appetites are dead!

No, give them grains their fill,
Husks, draff to drink and swill:
If they love lees, and leave the lusty wine,
Envy them not, their palate's with the swine.

No doubt some mouldy tale,
Like Pericles, and stale
As the shrieve's crusts, and nasty as his fish—
Scraps out of every dish
Thrown forth, and raked into the common tub,
May keep up the Play-club:
There, sweepings do as well
As the best ordered meal;
For who the relish of these guests will fit,
Needs set them but the alms-basket of wit.

And much good do't you then:
Brave plush-and-velvet-men
Can feed on orts; and, safe in your stage clothes,
Dare quit, upon your oaths,
The stagers and the stage-wrights too, your peers,
Of larding your large ears
With their foul comic socks,
Wrought upon twenty blocks;
Which if they are torn, and turned, and patched enough,
The gamesters share your gilt, and you their stuff.

Leave things so prostitute,
And take the Alcaic lute;
Or thine own Horace, or Anacreon's lyre;
Warm thee by Pindar's fire:
And though thy nerves be shrunk, and blood be cold,
Ere years have made thee old,
Strike that disdainful heat
Throughout, to their defeat,
As curious fools, and envious of thy strain,
May, blushing, swear no palsy's in thy brain.

But when they hear thee sing
The glories of thy king,
His zeal to God, and his just awe o'er men:
They may, blood-shaken then,
Feel such a flesh-quake to possess their powers,
As they shall cry: "Like ours
In sound of peace or wars,
No harp e'er hit the stars,
In tuning forth the acts of his sweet reign,
And raising Charles his chariot 'bove his Wain."

TO MASTER ANTHONY STAFFORD.

RANDOLPH.

Probably written about 1632, *and first printed in the posthumous edition of* 1638.

COME, spur away,
I have no patience for a longer stay,
But must go down,
And leave the chargeable noise of this great town;
I will the country see,
Where old simplicity,
Though hid in grey,
Doth look more gay
Than foppery in plush and scarlet clad.
Farewell, you city wits, that are
Almost at civil war;
'Tis time that I grow wise, when all the world grows mad.

More of my days
I will not spend to gain an idiot's praise;
Or to make sport
For some slight puisne of the Inns-of-Court.
Then, worthy Stafford, say,

How shall we spend the day?
With what delights
Shorten the nights?
When from this tumult we are got secure,
Where mirth with all her freedom goes,
Yet shall no finger lose;
Where every word is thought, and every thought is pure.

There from the tree
We'll cherries pluck, and pick the strawberry;
And every day
Go see the wholesome country girls make hay,
Whose brown hath lovelier grace
Than any painted face,
That I do know
Hyde Park can show.
Where I had rather gain a kiss than meet
(Though some of them in greater state
Might court my love with plate)
The beauties of the Cheap, and wives of Lombard Street.

But think upon
Some other pleasures: these to me are none.
Why do I prate
Of women, that are things against my fate?
I never mean to wed
That torture to my bed.

My muse is she
My love shall be.
Let clowns get wealth and heirs ; when I am gone,
And the great bugbear, grisly death,
Shall take this idle breath,
If I a poem leave, that poem is my son.

Of this no more ;
We'll rather taste the bright Pomona's store.
No fruit shall 'scape
Our palates, from the damson to the grape.
Then (full) we'll seek a shade,
And hear what music's made ;
How Philomel
Her tale doth tell,
And how the other birds do fill the quire :
The thrush and blackbird lend their throats,
Warbling melodious notes ;
We will all sports enjoy which others but desire.

Ours is the sky,
Where at what fowl we please our hawk shall fly :
Nor will we spare
To hunt the crafty fox or timorous hare ;
But let our hounds run loose
In any ground they'll choose ;

The buck shall fall,
The stag, and all :
Our pleasures must from their own warrants be,
For to my muse, if not to me,
I'm sure all game is free :
Heaven, earth, are all but parts of her great royalty.

And when we mean
To taste of Bacchus' blessings now and then,
And drink by stealth
A cup or two to noble Barkley's health,
I'll take my pipe and try
The Phrygian melody ;
Which he that hears,
Lets through his ears
A madness to distemper all the brain.
Then I another pipe will take
And Doric music make,
To civilise with graver notes our wits again.

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

MILTON.

Begun at Cambridge, on Christmas morning, 1629, at daybreak, and first published, with the two following odes, in 1645.

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing,
That He our deadly forfeit should release,
And with His Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
Wherewith He wont at Heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside, and here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal-clay.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant-God?

Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
To welcome Him to this His new abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

See, how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:
O! run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
And lay it lowly at His blessed feet:
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the angel quire,
From out His secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

The Hymn.

It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born Child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature, in awe to Him,
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathise:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow:

And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
  The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But He, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace:
  She, crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
  With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;
And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

No war, or battle's sound,
Was heard the world around:
  The idle spear and shield were high up hung;
The hooked chariot stood
Unstain'd with hostile blood;
  The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sov'reign Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of Light
  His reign of peace upon the earth began;

The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in steadfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence:
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

And though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
The new-enlighten'd world no more should need:
He saw a greater Sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or e'er the point of dawn,
Sat simply chatting in a rustic row:

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Full little thought they than,
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below:
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
As never was by mortal finger strook;
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took:
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

Nature, that heard such sound,
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat, the airy region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all heaven and earth in happier union.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shamefaced night array'd;

The helmed cherubim,
And sworded seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
Harping, in loud and solemn quire,
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born Heir.

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung ;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so ;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time ;
And let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow ;
And, with your ninefold harmony,
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

For, if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back and fetch the age of gold ;

And speckled vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous sin will melt from earthly mould;
And hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

Yea, truth and justice then
Will down return to men,
Orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between,
Throned in celestial sheen,
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
And heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

But wisest Fate says No,
This must not yet be so;
The Babe lies yet in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss;
So both Himself and us to glorify:
Yet first, to those ychain'd in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep;

With such a horrid clang
As on Mount Sinai rang,
While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake:

The aged earth, aghast
With terror of that blast,
  Shall from the surface to the centre shake ;
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread His throne.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
  But now begins ; for, from this happy day,
The old Dragon, under ground
In straiter limits bound,
  Not half so far casts his usurped sway ;
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

The oracles are dumb,
No voice or hideous hum
  Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
  With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
  A voice of weeping heard and loud lament ;

From haunted spring and dale,
Edged with poplar pale,
The parting genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn,
The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;
In urns, and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar power foregoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baälim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice-batter'd god of Palestine;
And mooned Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn,
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;

In vain, with cymbals' ring,
They call the grisly king,
  In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
  Trampling the unshower'd grass with lowings loud:
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
  Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud;
In vain, with timbrell'd anthems dark,
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipp'd ark.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand,
  The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide,
  Nor Typhon huge ending in snaky twine;
Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling bands control the damned crew.

So, when the sun in bed,
Curtain'd with cloudy red,
  Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,

The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
  Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave;
And the yellow-skirted fays
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze

But see, the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest;
  Time is, our tedious song should here have ending:
Heaven's youngest-teemed star
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
  Her sleeping Lord, with handmaid lamp, attending:
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harness'd angels sit in order serviceable.

ON TIME.

MILTON. *Written at Cambridge about* 1630.

FLY, envious Time, till thou run out thy race ;
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping Hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace ;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false, and vain,
And merely mortal dross ;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain !
For when as each thing bad thou hast entomb'd,
And, last of all, thy greedy self consumed,
Then long eternity shall greet our bliss,
With an individual kiss ;
And joy shall overtake us as a flood,
When everything that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine,
With truth, and peace, and love, shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of Him, to whose happy-making sight alone

When once our heavenly-guided soul shall climb,
Then, all this earthly grossness quit,
Attired with stars we shall for ever sit,
Triumphing over death, and chance, and thee, O time!

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC.

MILTON. *Written at Cambridge about* 1630.

BLEST pair of sirens, pledges of heaven's joy,
Sphere-born, harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd power employ,
Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce ;
And to our high-raised phantasy present
That undisturbed song of pure content,
Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne
To Him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee ;
Where the bright seraphim, in burning row,
Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow ;
And the cherubic host, in thousand quires,
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly :
That we on earth, with undiscording voice,
May rightly answer that melodious noise,

As once we did, till disproportion'd sin
Jarr'd against nature's chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
In first obedience, and their state of good.
Oh, may we soon again renew that song,
And keep in tune with heaven, till God, ere long
To His celestial consort us unite,
To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light!

THE PRAISE OF PINDAR.

COWLEY.

Written in Paris, about 1645, *during the Royalist exile, and first printed in the volume of* 1656.

I.

PINDAR is imitable by none,
The Phœnix Pindar is a vast species alone,
Whoe'er but Dædalus with waxen wings could fly
And neither sink too low, nor soar too high?
What could he who followed claim,
But of vain boldness the unhappy fame,
And by his fall a sea to name?
Pindar's unnavigable song
Like a swoln flood from some steep mountain pours along;
The ocean meets with such a voice
From his enlarged mouth, as drowns the ocean's noise.

II.

So Pindar does new words and figures roll
Down his impetuous dithyrambic tide,
Which in no channel deigns to abide,
Which neither banks nor dykes control;

Whether the immortal gods he sings
In a no less immortal strain,
Or the great acts of god-descended kings,
Who in his numbers still survive and reign;
Each rich embroidered line
Which their triumphant brows around
By his sacred hand is bound,
Does all their starry diadems outshine.

III.

Whether at Pisa's race he please
To carve in polished verse the conqueror's images;
Whether the swift, the skilful, or the strong,
Be crownèd in his nimble, artful, vigorous song;
Whether some brave young man's untimely fate
In words worth dying for he celebrate,
Such mournful and such pleasing words
As joy to his mother's and his mistress' grief affords;
He bids him live and grow in fame,
Among the stars he sticks his name,
The grave can but the dross of him devour,
So small is death's, so great the poet's power.

IV.

Lo, how the obsequious wind, and swelling air,
The Theban Swan does upward bear,
Into the walks of clouds, where he does play,

And with extended wings opens his liquid way;
Whilst, alas, my timorous Muse
Unambitious tracks pursues,
Does with weak unballast wings
About the mossy brooks and springs,
About the trees' new-blossomed heads,
About the garden's painted beds,
About the fields and flowery meads,
And all inferior beauteous things,
Like the laborious bee,
For little drops of honey flee,
And there with humble sweets contents her industry.

CHRIST'S PASSION.

COWLEY. *First printed in the "Verses on several Occasions" of* 1663.

I.

ENOUGH, my Muse, of earthly things,
And inspirations but of wind,
Take up thy lute and to it bind
Loud and everlasting strings;
And on them play, and to them sing,
The happy mournful stories,
The lamentable glories
Of the great crucified King!
Mountainous heap of wonders, which dost rise
Till earth thou joinest with the skies!
Too large at bottom and at top too high
To be half seen by mortal eye;
How shall I grasp this boundless thing?
What shall I play? what shall I sing?
I'll sing the mighty riddle of mysterious love,
Which neither wretched man below, nor blessed spirits above,

With all their comments can explain,—
How all the whole world's Life to die did not disdain.

II.

I'll sing the searchless depths of the compassion divine,
The depths unfathomed yet
By reason's plummet and the line of wit,—
Too light the plummet and too short the line;
How the Eternal Father did bestow
His own Eternal Son as ransom for his foe;
I'll sing aloud that all the world may hear
The triumph of the buried conqueror,
How Hell was by its prisoner captive led,
And the great slayer, Death, slain by the Dead.

III.

Methinks I hear of murdered men the voice
Mixed with the murderers' confused noise,
Sound from the top of Calvary;
My greedy eyes fly up the hill, and see
Who 'tis hangs there, the midmost of the three;
O how unlike the others He!
Look how he bends his gentle head with blessings from the tree!
His gracious hands, ne'er stretched but to do good,
Are nailed to the infâmous wood;
And sinful man does fondly bind
The arms which He extends to embrace all human kind.

IV.

Unhappy Man, canst thou stand by and see
All this as patiently as He?
Since He thy sins doth bear,
Make thou His sufferings thine own,
And weep, and sigh, and groan,
And beat thy breast and tear
Thy garments and thy hair,
And let thy grief and let thy love
Through all thy bleeding bowels move!
Dost thou not see thy Prince in purple clad all o'er,
Not purple brought from the Sidonian shore,
But made at home with richer gore?
Dost thou not see the roses which adorn
The thorny garland by Him worn?
Dost thou not see the livid traces
Of the sharp scourge's rude embraces?
If yet thou feelest not the smart
Of thorns and scourges in thy heart,
If that be yet not crucified,
Look on his hands, look on his feet, look on his side!

V.

Open, oh! open wide the fountains of thine eyes,
And let them call
Their stock of moisture forth where'er it lies;
For this will ask it all;

'Twould all, alas! too little be
Though thy salt tears came from a sea;
Canst thou deny Him this, when He
Has opened all His vital springs for thee?
Take heed, for by His side's mysterious flood
May well be understood
That He will still require some waters to His blood.

UPON CROMWELL'S RETURN FROM IRELAND.

MARVELL.

Probably composed in 1654, *but not printed until* 1776.

THE forward youth that would appear,
Must now forsake his Muses dear,
Nor in the shadows sing
His numbers languishing.
'Tis time to leave the books in dust
And oil th' unusèd armour's rust,
Removing from the wall
The corslet of the hall.
So restless Cromwell could not cease
In the inglorious arts of peace,
But through adventurous war
Urgèd his active star:
And like the three-forked lightning first,
Breaking the clouds where it was nurst,
Did thorough his own side
His fiery way divide:
For 'tis all one to courage high
The emulous or enemy;

And with such, to enclose
Is more than to oppose.
Then burning through the air he went
And palaces and temples rent ;
And Cæsar's head at last
Did through his laurels blast.
'Tis madness to resist or blame
The face of angry heaven's flame ;
And if we would speak true,
Much to the Man is due,
Who, from his private gardens, where
He lived reservèd and austere
(As if his highest plot
To plant the bergamot),
Could by industrious valour climb
To ruin the great work of time,
And cast the Kingdoms old
Into another mould.
Tho' Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient Rights in vain—
But those do hold or break,
As men are strong or weak.
Nature that hateth emptiness,
Allows of penetration less,
And therefore must make room
Where greater spirits come.
What field of all the civil war

Where his were not the deepest scar?
And Hampton shews what part
He had of wiser art.
Where, twining subtle fears with hope,
He wove a net of such a scope
That Charles himself might chase
To Carisbrooke's narrow case.
That thence the royal actor borne
The tragic scaffold might adorn:
While round the armed bands
Did clap their bloody hands:
He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try:
Nor called the Gods, with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.
—This was that memorable hour
Which first assured the forced power:
So when they did design
The Capitol's first line,
A Bleeding Head, where they begun,
Did fright the architects to run;
And yet in that the State
Foresaw its happy fate!

And now the Irish are ashamed
To see themselves in one year tamed :
So much one man can do
That does both act and know.
They can affirm his praises best,
And have, though overcome, confest
How good he is, how just
And fit for highest trust;
Nor yet grown stiffer with command
But still in the Republic's hand—
How fit he is to sway
That can so well obey!
He to the Commons' feet presents
A kingdom for his first year's rents,
And (what he may) forbears
His fame to make it theirs :
And has his sword and spoils ungirt
To lay them at the Public's skirt.
So when the falcon high
Falls heavy from the sky,
She, having killed, no more doth search,
But on the next green bough to perch,
Where when he first does lure
The falconer has her sure.
—What may not then our Isle presume
While victory his crest does plume?
What may not others fear

If thus he crowns each year!
As Cæsar he, ere long, to Gaul,
To Italy an Hannibal,
And to all states not free
Shall climacteric be.
The Pict no shelter now shall find
Within his parti-coloured mind,
But from their valour, sad
Shrink underneath the plaid.—
Happy, if in the tufted brake
The English hunter him mistake,
Nor lay his hounds in near
The Caledonian deer.
But thou the War's and Fortune's son,
March indefatigably on;
And, for the last effect,
Still keep the sword erect;
Besides the force it has to fright
The spirits of the shady night,
The same arts that did gain
A power, must it maintain.

TO THE PIOUS MEMORY OF MRS. ANNE KILLIGREW.

DRYDEN.

Prefixed to the "Poems" of Anne Killigrew, in 1686. *The young lady, daughter or niece of three dramatists, was a maid of honour to the Duchess of York, cultivated the Muses, and died of smallpox in her twenty-fifth year, in* 1685.

I.

THOU youngest virgin-daughter of the skies,
Made in the last promotion of the blest;
Whose palms, new plucked from Paradise,
In spreading branches more sublimely rise,
Rich with immortal green above the rest:
Whether, adopted to some neighbouring star,
Thou rollst above us in thy wandering race,
Or in procession fixed and regular
Moved with the heaven's majestic pace,
Or called to more superior bliss,
Thou treadst with seraphims the vast abyss:
Whatever happy region be thy place,
Cease thy celestial song a little space;
Thou wilt have time enough for hymns divine,
Since Heaven's eternal year is thine.
Hear then a mortal Muse thy praise rehearse

In no ignoble verse,
But such as thy own voice did practise here,
When thy first fruits of poesy were given,
To make thyself a welcome inmate there;
While yet a young probationer,
And candidate of Heaven.

II.

If by traduction came thy mind,
Our wonder is the less to find
A soul so charming from a stock so good;
Thy father was transfused into thy blood:
So wert thou born into the tuneful strain,
(An early, rich, and inexhausted vein.)
But if thy pre-existing soul
Was formed at first with myriads more,
It did through all the mighty poets roll
Who Greek or Latin laurels wore,
And was that Sappho last, which once it was before.
If so, then cease thy flight, O heaven-born mind!
Thou hast no dross to purge from thy rich ore:
Nor can thy soul a fairer mansion find
Than was the beauteous frame she left behind:
Return, to fill or mend the quire of thy celestial kind.

III.

May we presume to say that, at thy birth,
New joy was sprung in heaven as well as here on earth?

For sure the milder planets did combine
On thy auspicious horoscope to shine,
And even the most malicious were in trine.
Thy brother-angels at thy birth
Strung each his lyre, and tuned it high,
That all the people of the sky
Might know a poetess was born on earth;
And then, if ever, mortal ears
Had heard the music of the spheres.
And if no clustering swarm of bees
On thy sweet mouth distilled their golden dew,
'Twas that such vulgar miracles
Heaven had not leisure to renew:
For all the blest fraternity of love
Solemnized there thy birth, and kept thy holiday above.

IV.

O gracious God! how far have we
Profaned thy heavenly gift of Poesy!
Made prostitute and profligate the Muse,
Debased to each obscene and impious use,
Whose harmony was first ordained above,
For tongues of angels and for hymns of love!
Oh wretched we! why were we hurried down
This lubric and adulterate age,
(Nay, added fat pollutions of our own,)
To increase the steaming ordures of the stage?

What can we say to excuse our second fall?
Let this thy Vestal, Heaven, atone for all:
Her Arethusian stream remains unsoiled,
Unmixed with foreign filth and undefiled;
Her wit was more than man, her innocence a child.

V.

Art she had none, yet wanted none,
For Nature did that want supply:
So rich in treasures of her own,
She might our boasted stores defy:
Such noble vigour did her verse adorn
That it seemed borrowed, where 'twas only born.
Her morals too were in her bosom bred,
By great examples daily fed,
What in the best of books, her father's life, she read.
And to be read herself she need not fear;
Each test and every light her Muse will bear,
Though Epictetus with his lamp were there.
Even love (for love sometimes her Muse exprest),
Was but a lambent flame which played about her breast;
Light as the vapours of a morning dream,
So cold herself, whilst she such warmth exprest,
'Twas Cupid bathing in Diana's stream.

VI.

Born to the spacious empire of the Nine,
One would have thought she should have been content

To manage well that mighty government;
But what can young ambitious souls confine?
To the next realm she stretched her sway,
For Painture near adjoining lay,
A plenteous province and alluring prey.
A Chamber of Dependences was framed,
As conquerors will never want pretence,
(When armed, to justify the offence),
And the whole fief in right of Poetry she claimed.
The country open lay without defence;
For poets frequent inroads there had made,
And perfectly could represent
The shape, the face, with every lineament,
And all the large demains which the dumb Sister swayed;
All bowed beneath her government,
Received in triumph wheresoe'er she went.
Her pencil drew whate'er her soul designed,
And oft the happy draught surpassed the image in her mind.
The sylvan scenes of herds and flocks
And fruitful plains and barren rocks;
Of shallow brooks that flowed so clear,
The bottom did the top appear;
Of deeper too and ampler floods
Which, as in mirrors, showed the woods;
Of lofty trees, with sacred shades
And perspectives of pleasant glades,
Where nymphs of brightest form appear,

And shaggy satyrs standing near,
Which them at once admire and fear.
The ruins too of some majestic piece,
Boasting the power of ancient Rome or Greece,
Whose statues, friezes, columns, broken lie,
And, though defaced, the wonder of the eye;
What nature, art, bold fiction, e'er durst frame,
Her forming hand gave feature to the name.
So strange a concourse ne'er was seen before,
But when the peopled ark the whole creation bore.

VII.

The scene then changed; with bold erected look
Our martial King the sight with reverence strook:
For, not content to express his outward part,
Her hand called out the image of his heart:
His warlike mind, his soul devoid of fear,
His high-designing thoughts were figured there,
As when by magic ghosts are made appear.
Our phœnix queen was portrayed too so bright,
Beauty alone could beauty take so right:
Her dress, her shape, her matchless grace,
Were all observed, as well as heavenly face.
With such a peerless majesty she stands,
As in that day she took the crown from sacred hands;
Before a train of heroines was seen,

In beauty foremost, as in rank the queen.
Thus nothing to her genius was denied,
But like a ball of fire, the farther thrown,
Still with a greater blaze she shone,
And her bright soul broke out on every side.
What next she had designed, Heaven only knows:
To such immoderate growth her conquest rose
That Fate alone its progress could oppose.

VIII.

Now all those charms, that blooming grace,
The well-proportioned shape and beauteous face,
Shall never more be seen by mortal eyes;
In earth the much-lamented virgin lies.
Not wit nor piety could Fate prevent;
Nor was the cruel Destiny content
To finish all the murder at a blow,
To sweep at once her life and beauty too;
But, like a hardened felon, took a pride
To work more mischievously slow,
And plundered first, and then destroyed.
O double sacrilege on things divine,
To rob the relic, and deface the shrine!
But thus Orinda died:
Heaven by the same disease did both translate;
As equal were their souls, so equal was their fate.

IX.

Meantime, her warlike brother on the seas
His waving streamers to the winds displays,
And vows for his return with vain devotion pays.
Ah, generous youth! that wish forbear,
The winds too soon will waft thee here!
Slack all thy sails, and fear to come;
Alas! thou knowst not, thou art wrecked at home.
No more shalt thou behold thy sister's face,
Thou hast already had her last embrace.
But look aloft, and if thou kenst from far,
Among the Pleiads, a new-kindled star,
If any sparkles than the rest more bright,
'Tis she that shines in that propitious light.

X.

When in mid-air the golden trump shall sound,
To raise the nations under ground;
When in the Valley of Jehoshaphat
The judging God shall close the book of Fate,
And there the last assizes keep
For those who wake and those who sleep;
When rattling bones together fly
From the four corners of the sky;
When sinews o'er the skeletons are spread,
Those clothed with flesh, and life inspires the dead;
The sacred poets first shall hear the sound,

And foremost from the tomb shall bound,
For they are covered with the lightest ground ;
And straight, with inborn vigour, on the wing,
Like mounting larks, to the new morning sing.
There thou, sweet saint, before the quire shalt go,
As harbinger of Heaven, the way to show,
The way which thou so well hast learned below.

FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

DRYDEN.

Written for November 22nd, 1687, and set to music by a composer named Draghi. It first appeared in the third volume of Dryden's "Miscellanies."

I.

FROM harmony, from heavenly harmony
This universal frame began;
When Nature underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay,
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
Arise, ye more than dead.
Then cold and hot and moist and dry
In order to their stations leap,
And Music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony
This universal frame began:
From harmony to harmony
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in Man.

II.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell?
When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
His listening brethren stood around,
And, wondering, on their faces fell
To worship that celestial sound:
Less than a god they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell,
That spoke so sweetly, and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

III.

The trumpet's loud clangor
Excites us to arms
With shrill notes of anger
And mortal alarms.
The double double double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries, hark! the foes come;
Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat.

IV.

The soft complaining flute
In dying notes discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.

V.

Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains and height of passion,
For the fair, disdainful dame.

VI.

But oh! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

VII.

Orpheus could lead the savage race,
And trees unrooted left their place,
Sequacious of the lyre;
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher:
When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appeared
Mistaking earth for heaven.

GRAND CHORUS.

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,

And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the blessed above;
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST;

OR, THE POWER OF MUSIC.

DRYDEN.

Written for the same day as the preceding, but in 1697. *According to Bolingbroke, Dryden sat up all one night, and concluded the poem at a heat. He received £*40 *for it.*

I.

'TWAS at the royal feast for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son:
Aloft in awful state
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne;
His valiant peers were placed around;
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound:
(So should desert in arms be crowned.)
The lovely Thais, by his side,
Sate like a blooming Eastern bride,
In flower of youth and beauty's pride.
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

CHORUS.

Happy, happy, happy pair !
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

II.

Timotheus, placed on high
Amid the tuneful quire,
With flying fingers touched the lyre :
The trembling notes ascend the sky,
And heavenly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove,
Who left his blissful seats above,
(Such is the power of mighty love.)
A dragon's fiery form belied the god :
Sublime on radiant spires he rode,
When he to fair Olympia pressed :
And while he sought her snowy breast,
Then round her slender waist he curled,
And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign of the world.
The listening crowd admire the lofty sound,
A present deity, they shout around ;
A present deity, the vaulted roofs rebound :
With ravished ears
The monarch hears,

Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

CHORUS.

With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

III.

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
Of Bacchus ever fair, and ever young.
The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;
Flushed with a purple grace
He shows his honest face:
Now give the hautboys breath; he comes, he comes.
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

CHORUS.

Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure ;
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

IV.

Soothed with the sound the king grew vain ;
Fought all his battles o'er again ;
And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew the slain.
The master saw the madness rise,
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes ;
And while he heaven and earth defied,
Changed his hand, and checked his pride.
He chose a mournful Muse,
Soft pity to infuse ;
He sung Darius great and good,
By too severe a fate,
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate
And weltering in his blood ;
Deserted at his utmost need
By those his former bounty fed ;
On the bare earth exposed he lies,
With not a friend to close his eyes.

With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

CHORUS.

Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

V.

The mighty master smiled to see
That love was in the next degree;
'Twas but a kindred-sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
War, he sung, is toil and trouble;
Honour but an empty bubble;
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying:
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, O think it worth enjoying:
Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
Take the good the gods provide thee.

The many rend the skies with loud applause ;
So Love was crowned, but Music won the cause.
The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again ;
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

CHORUS.

The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again ;
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

VI.

Now strike the golden lyre again ;
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
Break his bands of sleep asunder,
And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark, hark, the horrid sound
Has raised up his head ;
As awaked from the dead,

And amazed, he stares around.
Revenge, revenge, Timotheus cries,
See the Furies arise;
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain:
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew.
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes,
And glittering temples of their hostile gods.
The princes applaud with a furious joy;
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

CHORUS.

And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

VII.

Thus long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
While organs yet were mute,
Timotheus, to his breathing flute
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown:
He raised a mortal to the skies;
She drew an angel down.

GRAND CHORUS.

At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
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He raised a mortal to the skies ;
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FOR MUSIC.

MULGRAVE.

Performed at the funeral of Henry Purcell, the musician, in the end of November, 1695.

GOOD angels snatched him eagerly on high,
Joyful they flew, singing and soaring, through the sky,
Teaching his new-fledged soul to fly ;
While we, alas ! lamenting lie.
He went musing all along,
Composing new their heavenly song :
Awhile his skilful notes loud hallelujahs drowned,
But soon they ceased their own, to catch his pleasing sound.
David himself improved the harmony,
David, in sacred story so renowned
No less for music than for poetry !
Genius sublime in either art,
Crowned with applause surpassing all desert !
A man just after God's own heart !
If human cares are lawful to the blest
Already settled in eternal rest,
Needs must he wish that Purcell only might

Have lived to set what he vouchsafed to write ;
For sure the noble thirst of fame
With the frail body never dies,
But with the soul ascends the skies
From whence at first it came.
'Tis sure no little proof we have
That part of us survives the grave,
And in our fame below still bears a share :
Why is the future else so much our care,
Even in our latest moment of despair,
And Death despised for Fame by all the wise and brave ?
O all ye blest harmonious choir,
Who Power Almighty only love, and only that admire !
Look down with pity from your peaceful bower
On this sad isle perplexed,
And ever, ever vexed
With anxious care of trifles, wealth and power ;
In our rough minds due reverence infuse
For sweet melodious sounds, and each harmonious muse
Music exalts man's nature, and inspires
High elevated thoughts, or gentle, kind desires.

ON NOTHING.

ROCHESTER.

First printed at Antwerp, in 1680, *immediately after the author's death.*

NOTHING, thou elder brother even to shade,
Thou had'st a being e'er the world was made,
And, well-fixed, art alone of ending not afraid.

E'er Time and Place were, Time and Place were not,
When primitive Nothing Something straight begot,
Then all proceeded from the great united What?

Something, the general attribute of all,
Severed from thee, its sole original,
Into thy boundless self must undistinguished fall.

Yet Something did thy mighty power command,
And from thy fruitful emptiness's hand
Snatcht men, beasts, birds, fire, water, air and land.

Matter, the wickedest offspring of thy race,
By Form assisted, flew from thy embrace,
And rebel Light obscured thy reverend dusky face.

With Form and Matter, Time and Place did join;
Body, thy foe, did with these leagues combine
To spoil thy peaceful reign, and ruin all thy line.

But turn-coat Time assists thy foes in vain,
And, bribed by thee, destroys their short-lived reign,
And to thy hungry womb drives back thy slaves again.

These mysteries are barred from laic eyes,
And the divine alone with warrant pries
Into thy bosom where the truth in private lies.

Yet this of thee the wise may freely say,
Thou from the virtuous nothing tak'st away,
And to be part of thee the wicked wisely pray.

Great negative, how vainly would the wise
Enquire, define, distinguish, teach, devise,
Did'st thou not stand to point their dull philosophies!

Is, or *Is not*, the two great ends of Fate,
And True or False the subject of debate,
That perfect or destroy the vast designs of fate,

When they have racked the politician's breast,
Within thy bosom most securely rest,
And when reduced to thee, are least unsafe, and best.

But, Nothing, why does Something still permit
That sacred monarchs should at table sit
With persons shrewdly thought, at best, for Nothing fit?

Whilst weighty Something modestly abstains
From princes' coffers and from statesmen's brains,
And nothing there, like stately Nothing, reigns.

Nothing, who dwell'st with fools in grave disguise,
For whom they reverend shapes and forms devise,
Lawn sleeves, and furs, and gowns, when they, like thee,
look wise.

French truth, Dutch prowess, English policy,
Hibernian learning, Scotch civility,
Spaniards' dispatch, Danes' wit, are mainly seen in thee.

The great man's gratitude to his best friend,
Kings' pledges, lovers' vows, all to thee tend,
Flow swiftly into thee, and in thee ever end.

ODE, SUR LA PRISE DE NAMUR,

L'Année 1692.

Boileau.

To show how close is the parody of Boileau's style, the French text has been printed opposite the English.

QUELLE docte et sainte ivresse
Aujourd'hui me fait la loi?
Chastes Nymphes du Permesse,
N'est-ce pas vous que je vois?
Accourez, troupe savante,
Des sons que ma lyre enfante
Ces arbres sont réjoüis.
Marquez en bien la cadence;
Et vous, Vents, faites silence:
Je vais parler de Louis.

Dans ses chansons immortelles,
Comme un aigle audacieux,
Pindare étendant ses ailes,
Fuit loin des vulgaires yeux.

AN ODE ON THE TAKING OF NAMUR, 1695.

DULCE EST DESIPERE IN LOCO.

PRIOR.

Originally printed, as a folio pamphlet, in 1695, *but the present text is taken from the "Poems" of* 1718, *as revised by Prior himself.*

SOME Folks are drunk, yet do not know it :
So might not Bacchus give you law ?
Was it a muse, O lofty Poet,
Or virgin of St. Cyr, you saw?
Why all this fury ? What's the matter,
That oaks must come from Thrace to dance ?
Must stupid stocks be taught to flatter,
And is there no such wood in France ?
Why must the winds all hold their tongue ?
If they a little breath should raise,
Would that have spoil'd the poet's song,
Or puff'd away the monarch's praise.

Pindar, that eagle, mounts the skies ;
While virtue leads the noble way :
Too like a vulture Boileau flies,
Where sordid interest shows the prey.

Mais, ô ma fidèle lyre,
Si dans l'ardeur qui m'inspire,
Tu peux suivre mes transports ;
Les chênes des monts de Thrace
N'ont rien oüi que n'efface
La douceur de tes accords.

Est-ce Apollon et Neptune
Qui sur ces rocs sourcilleux,
Ont, compagnons de Fortune,
Bâti ces murs orgueilleux ?
De leur enceinte fameuse
La Sambre unie à la Meuse
Deffend le fatal abord,
Et par cent bouches horribles
L'airain sur ces monts terribles
Vomit le fer, et la mort.

Dix mille vaillans Alcides
Les bordant de toutes parts,
D'éclairs au loin homicides
Font petiller leurs rèmparts :
Et dans son sein infidele
Par tout la terre y recele
Un feu prest à s'élancer,
Qui soudain perçant son goufre,
A quiconque ose avancer.

When once the poet's honour ceases,
From reason far his transports rove ;
And Boileau, for eight hundred pieces,
Makes Louis take the wall of Jove.

Neptune, and Sol came from above,
Shap'd like Megrigny, and Vauban ;
They arm'd these rocks, then show'd old Jove
Of Marli wood the wondrous plan.
Such walls, these three wise gods agreed,
By human force could ne'er be shaken ;
But you and I in Homer read
Of gods, as well as men, mistaken.
Sambre and Maese their waves may join,
But ne'er can William's force restrain ;
He'll pass them both, who pass'd the Boyne :
Remember this, and arm the Seine.

Full fifteen thousand lusty fellows
With fire and sword the fort maintain ;
Each was a Hercules, you tell us,
Yet out they march'd like common men.
Cannons above, and mines below
Did death and tombs for foes contrive ;
Yet matters have been order'd so,
That most of us are still alive.

Namur, devant tes murailles,
Jadis la Grèce eut vingt ans,
Sans fruit veu les funerailles
De ses plus fiers combattans.
Quelle effroyable Puissance
Aujourd-hui pourtant s'avance
Prete à foudroyer tes monts?
Quel bruit, quel feu l'environne
C'est Jupiter en personne,
Ou c'est le vainqueur de Mons.

N'en doute point, c'est lui-meme;
Tout brille en lui, tout est roy.
Dans Bruxelles Nassau blême
Commence à trembler pour toi;
En vain il voit le Batâve,
Desormais docile esclâve,
Rangé sous ses étendards:
En vain au Lion Belgique
Il voit l'Aigle Germanique
Uni sous les leopards.

Plein de la frayeur nouvelle
Dont ses sens sont agités

If Namur be compar'd to Troy,
Then Britain's boys excelled the Greeks:
Their siege did ten long years employ,
We've done our bus'ness in ten weeks.
What godhead does so fast advance,
With dreadful power those hills to gain?
'Tis little Will, the scourge of France,
No godhead, but the first of men.
His mortal arm exerts the pow'r,
To keep ev'n Mons's victor under:
And that same Jupiter no more
Shall fright the world with impious thunder.

Our King thus trembles at Namur,
Whilst Villeroy, who ne'er afraid is,
To Bruxelles marches on secure,
To bomb the monks, and scare the ladies.
After this glorious expedition,
One battle makes the marshal great;
He must perform his king's commission:
Who knows but Orange may retreat?
Kings are allow'd to feign the gout,
Or be prevail'd with not to fight;
And mighty Louis hop'd, no doubt,
That William wou'd preserve that right.

From Seine and Loire, to Rhone and Po,
See ev'ry mother's son appear;

A son secours il appelle
Les peuples les plus vantés
Ceux-là viennent du rivage
Ou s'enorgueillet le Tage
De l'or, qui roule en ses eaux ;
Ceux-ci des champs où la néige
Des marais de la Norvége
Neuf mois couvre les roseaux.

Mais qui fait enfler la Sambre ?
Sous les jumeaux effrayês,
Des froids torrens de Decembre
Les champs par tout sont noyés.
Cerés s'enfuit éplorée
De voir en proye à Borée
Ses guerets d'epics chargés.
Et sous les urnes fangeuses
Des Hyades orageuses
Tout ses trésors submergés.

Déployez toutes vos rages,
Princes, vents, peuples, frimats,
Ramassez tous vos nuages,
Rassemblez tous vos soldats

In such a case ne'er blame a foe,
If he betrays some little fear:
He comes, the mighty Villeroy comes;
Finds a small river in his way:
So waves his colours, beats his drums;
And thinks it prudent there to stay.
The Gallic troops breathe blood and war;
The marshal cares not to march faster;
Poor Vill'roy moves so slowly here,
We fancy'd all, it was his master.

Will no kind flood, no friendly rain
Disguise the marshal's plain disgrace?
No torrents swell the low Mehayne?
The world will say, he durst not pass.
Why will no Hyades appear,
Dear poet, on the banks of Sambre?
Just as they did that mighty year,
When you turn'd June into December?
The water-nymphs are too unkind
To Vill'roy; are the land-nymphs so?
And fly they all, at once combin'd
To shame a general and a beau?

Truth, justice, sense, religion, fame,
May join to finish William's story;
Nations set free may bless his name,
And France in secret own his glory.

Malgré vous Namur en poudre
S'en va tomber sous la foudre
Qui domta Lille, Courtray,
Gand, la superbe Espagnole,
Saint Omer, Besançon, Dôle,
Ypres, Mastricht, et Cambray.

Mes présages s'accomplissent :
Il commence à chanceler :
Sous les coups qui retentissent
Ses murs s'en vont s'écrouler.
Mars en feu qui les domine
Soufle à grand bruit leur ruine
Et les bombes dans les airs
Allant chercher le tonnere,
Semblent tombant sur la terre,
Vouloir s'ouvrir les enfers.

Accourez, Nassau, Bavière,
De ces Murs l'unique espoir :
A couvert d'une riviere
Venez, vous pouvez tout voir.
Considerez ces approches :
Voyez, grimper sur ces roches
Ces athletes belliqueux ;
Et dans les eaux, dans la flamme

But Ypres, Maestricht and Cambray,
Besançon, Ghent, St. Omers, Lysle,
Courtray and Dôle,—ye critics, say,
How poor to this was Pindar's style?
With eke's and also's tack thy strain,
Great bard; and sing the deathless prince,
Who lost Namur the same campaign,
He bought Dixmude, and plunder'd Deynse.

I'll hold ten pound, my dream is out,
I'd tell it you, but for the rattle
Of those confounded drums; no doubt
Yon' bloody rogues intend a battle.
Dear me! a hundred thousand French
With terror fill the neighb'ring field;
While William carries on the trench,
'Till both the town and castle yield.
Vill'roy to Boufflers should advance,
Says Mars, through cannons' mouths in fire;
Id est, one mareschal of France
Tells t'other, he can come no nigher.

Regain the lines the shortest way,
Vill'roy, or to Versailles take post;
For, having seen it, thou can'st say
The steps, by which Namur was lost.
The smoke and flame may vex thy sight;
Look not once back; but, as thou goest,

Louis à tout donnant l'ame,
Marcher, courir avec eux.

Contemplez dans la tempête
Qui sort de ces boulevards,
La plume qui sur sa tête
Attire tous les regards.
A cet astre redoutable
Toujours un sort favorable
S'attache dans les combats :
Et toujours avec la gloire
Mars amenant la victoire
Vole, et le suit à grands pas.

Grands deffenseurs de l'Espagne,
Montrez-vous, il en est temps,
Courage, vers la Mahagne
Voilà vos drapeaux flottans.
Jamais ses ondes craintives
N'ont vu sur leurs foibles rives
Tant de guerriers s'amasser.
Courez donc. Qui vous retarde ?
Tout l'univers vous regarde.
N'osez-vous la traverser?

Loin de fermer le passage
A vos nombreux bataillons,

Quicken the squadrons in their flight;
And bid the Devil take the slowest.
Think not what reason to produce,
From Louis to conceal thy fear;
He'll own the strength of thy excuse,
Tell him that William was but there.

Now let us look for Louis' feather,
That us'd to shine so like a star,
The generals could not get together,
Wanting that influence, great in war;
O poet! thou had'st been discreeter,
Hanging the monarch's hat so high;
If thou had'st dubb'd thy star, a meteor;
That did but blaze, and rove, and die.

To animate the doubtful fight,
Namur in vain expects that ray;
In vain France hopes, the sickly light
Should shine near William's fuller day.
It knows Versailles, it's proper station,
Nor cares for any foreign sphere;
Where you see Boileau's constellation,
Be sure no danger can be near.

The French had gathered all their force;
And William met them in their way:

Luxembourg a du rivage
Reculé ses pavillons.
Quoi ? leur seul aspect vous glace ?
Ou sont ces chefs pleins d'audace
Jadis si prompts à marcher,
Qui devoient de la Tamise
Et de la Drâve soûmise
Jusqu'à Paris nous chercher ?

Cependant l'effroi redouble
Sur les remparts de Namur.
Son gouverneur qui se trouble
S'enfuit sous son dernier mur.
Dejà jusques à ses portes
Je vois monter nos cohortes,
La flamme et le fer en main :
Et sur les monceaux de piques,
De corps morts, de rocs, de briques,
S'ouvrir un large chemin.

C'en est fait. Je viens d'entendre
Sur ces rochers éperdus
Battre un signal pour se rendre :
Le feu cesse. Ils sont rendus.

Yet off they brush'd, both foot and horse.
What has friend Boileau left to say?
When his high muse is bent upon't
To sing her king, that great commander,
Or on the shores of Hellespont,
Or in the valleys near Scamander,
Would it not spoil his noble task,
If any foolish Phrygian there is
Impertinent enough to ask,
How far Namur may be from Paris?

Two stanzas more before we end,
Of death, pikes, rocks, arms, bricks and fire:
Leave 'em behind you, honest friend:
And with your country-men retire.
Your ode is spoilt, Namur is freed;
For Dixmuyd something yet is due;
So good Count Guiscard may proceed;
But Boufflers, Sir, one word with you.—

'Tis done. In sight of these commanders,
Who neither fight, nor raise the siege;
The foes of France march safe through Flanders,
Divide to Bruxelles, or to Liege.
Send, Fame, this news to Trianon,
That Boufflers may new honours gain:

Dépoüillez votre arrogance,
Fiers ennemis de la France,
Et desormais gracieux,
Allez à Liege, à Bruxelles,
Porter les humbles nouvelles
De Namur pris à vos yeux.

He the same play by land has shown,
As Tourville did upon the main.
Yet is the marshal made a peer !
O William, may thy arms advance,
That he may lose Dinant next year,
And so be constable of France.

ON MRS. ARABELLA HUNT, SINGING.

CONGREVE.

First printed, in the 3rd vol. of Dryden's "Miscellanies," in 1693.

I.

LET all be hush'd, each softest motion cease,
Be ev'ry loud tumultuous thought at peace,
And ev'ry ruder gasp of breath
Be calm, as in the arms of death:
And thou, most fickle, most uneasy part,
Thou restless wanderer, my heart,
Be still; gently, ah! gently, leave,
Thou busy, idle thing, to heave:
Stir not a pulse; and let my blood,
That turbulent unruly flood,
Be softly staid:
Let me be all, but my attention, dead.
Go, rest, unnecessary springs of life,
Leave your officious toil and strife;
For I would hear her voice, and try
If it be possible to die.

II.

Come, all ye love-sick maids and wounded swains,
And listen to her healing strains.
A wondrous balm between her lips she wears,
Of sov'reign force to soften cares,
And this thro' ev'ry ear she can impart,
(By tuneful breath diffus'd) to ev'ry heart.
Swiftly the gentle charmer flies,
And to the tender grief soft air applies,
Which warbling mystic sounds
Cements the bleeding panter's wounds.
But, ah ! beware of clam'rous moan ;
Let no unpleasing murmur or harsh groan
Your slighted loves declare ;
Your very tend'rest moving sighs forbear,
For even they will be too boist'rous here.
Hither let nought but sacred silence come,
And let all saucy praise be dumb.

III.

And, lo! silence himself is here ;
Methinks I see the midnight God appear :
In all his downy pomp array'd,
Behold the rev'rend shade ;
An ancient sigh he sits upon,
Whose memory of sound is long since gone,
And purposely annihilated for his throne ;

Beneath two soft transparent clouds do meet,
In which he seems to sink his softer feet;
A melancholy thought, condens'd to air,
Stolen from a lover in despair,
Like a thin mantle serves to wrap
In fluid folds his visionary shape;
A wreath of darkness round his head he wears,
Where curling mists supply the want of hairs;
While the still vapours, which from poppies rise,
Bedew his hoary face and lull his eyes.

IV.

But, hark! the heav'nly sphere turns round,
And silence now is drown'd
In ecstasy of sound.
How on a sudden the still air is charm'd,
As if all harmony were just alarm'd!
And ev'ry soul, with transport fill'd,
Alternately is thaw'd and chill'd.
See how the heav'nly choir
Come flocking to admire,
And with what speed and care
Descending angels cut the thinnest air!
Haste then, come all th' immortal throng,
And listen to her song;
Leave your lov'd mansions in the sky,
And hither, quickly hither, fly;

Your loss of heav'n nor shall you need to fear ;
While she sings 'tis heaven here.

v.

See how they crowd, see how the little cherubs skip !
While others sit around her mouth, and sip
Sweet hallelujahs from her lip ;
Those lips where in surprise of bliss they rove ;
For ne'er before did angels taste
So exquisite a feast
Of music and of love.
Prepare, then, ye immortal choir!
Each sacred minstrel tune his lyre,
And with her voice in chorus join,
Her voice which, next to yours, is most divine ;
Bless the glad earth with heav'nly lays,
And to that pitch th' eternal accents raise,
Which only breath inspir'd can reach,
To notes which only she can learn and you can teach ;
While we, charm'd with the lov'd excess,
Are wrapt in sweet forgetfulness
Of all, of all, but of the present happiness,
Wishing for ever in that state to lie,
For ever to be dying so, yet never die.

ON THE SPRING.

GRAY.

The original title of this ode was "Noontide." It was composed at Stoke Poges early in 1742, a year of great fecundity with Gray, and was printed by Dodsley in 1752.

LO! where the rosy-bosomed Hours,
Fair Venus' train, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
And wake the purple year!
The Attic warbler pours her throat,
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of Spring;
While, whispering pleasure as they fly,
Cool zephyrs through the clear blue sky
Their gathered fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'ercanopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)

How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little are the proud,
  How indigent the great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care;
  The panting herds repose;
Yet hark, how through the peopled air
  The busy murmur glows!
The insect youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honeyed spring,
  And float amid the liquid noon;
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gaily gilded trim
  Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
  Such is the race of Man;
And they that creep, and they that fly,
  Shall end where they began.
Alike the Busy and the Gay
But flutter through life's little day,
  In Fortune's varying colours drest;
Brushed by the hand of rough Mischance,
Or chilled by Age, their airy dance
  They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear, in accents low,
The sportive kind reply:
"Poor moralist! and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display:
On hasty wings thy youth is flown;
Thy sun is set, thy Spring is gone—
We frolic while 't is May."

THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

GRAY.

The "Ode on the Progress of Poesy" was composed, except a few lines at the end, in Dec. 1754.

I. 1.

AWAKE, Æolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take.
The laughing flow'rs, that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along,
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Through verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign ;
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour :
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

I. 2.

O sov'reign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell ! the sullen Cares

And frantic Passions hear thy soft control.
On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curbed the fury of his car,
And dropped his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the sceptred hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feathered king
With ruffled plumes and flagging wing :
Quenched in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

I. 3.

Thee the voice, the dance, obey,
Tempered to thy warbled lay.
O'er Idalia's velvet green
The rosy-crownèd Loves are seen
On Cytherea's day
With antic Sports and blue-eyed Pleasures,
Frisking light in frolic measures ;
Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet :
To brisk notes in cadence beating,
Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow melting strains their Queen's approach declare :
Where'er she turns, the Graces homage pay.
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way :
O'er her warm cheek, and rising bosom, move
The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.

II. 1.

Man's feeble race what ills await!
Labour, and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease and Sorrow's weeping train,
And Death, sad refuge from the storms of Fate!
The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he given in vain the heavenly Muse?
Night and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky;
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glitt'ring shafts of war.

II. 2.

In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The Muse has broke the twilight gloom
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the odorous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat,
In loose numbers wildly sweet,
Their feathered-cinctured chiefs and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and generous shame,
The unconquerable Mind, and Freedom's holy flame.

II. 3.

Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles that crown the Ægean deep,
Fields that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering labyrinths creep,
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute but to the voice of anguish!
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around;
Every shade and hallowed fountain
Murmured deep a solemn sound:
Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, O Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

III. 1.

Far from the sun and summer gale,
In thy green lap was Nature's Darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon strayed,
To him the mighty mother did unveil
Her awful face: the dauntless child
Stretched forth his little arms and smiled.
"This pencil take (she said), whose colours clear

Richly paint the vernal year;
Thine too these golden keys, immortal Boy!
This can unlock the gates of joy;
Of horror that, and thrilling fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears."

III. 2.

Nor second he, that rode sublime
Upon the seraph wings of Ecstasy,
The secrets of th' abyss to spy,
He passed the flaming bounds of place and time:
The living throne, the sapphire blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw; but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding pace.

III. 3.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore!
Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o'er,
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe and words that burn.
But ah! 'tis heard no more—
O lyre divine, what daring spirit

Wakes thee now? Though he inherit
Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
That the Theban eagle bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air;
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray,
With orient hues unborrowed of the sun;
Yet shall he mount and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the Good how far—but far above the Great.

THE BARD.

GRAY.

The "Bard," which was a long time in hand, was not completed until the spring of 1757. *In July of that year Gray brought this poem and the preceding up to London, and had them printed by Horace Walpole at Strawberry Hill.*

I. 1.

"RUIN seize thee, ruthless King!
Confusion on thy banners wait;
Though fanned by Conquest's crimson wing,
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor even thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!"
Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scattered wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array.
Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless trance:
"To arms!" cried Mortimer, and couched his quivering lance.

I. 2.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,

Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the poet stood;
(Loose his beard and hoary hair
Streamed, like a meteor, to the troubled air).
And with a master's hand, and prophet's fire,
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.
"Hark, how each giant oak and desert cave
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, O King! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

I. 3.

"Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hushed the stormy main:
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed:
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topped head.
On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,
Smeared with gore, and ghastly pale:
Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail;
The famished eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,

Ye died amidst your dying country's cries—
No more I weep. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
I see them sit,—they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land:
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.

II. 1.

"Weave the warp, and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward's race.
Give ample room and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.
Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affright
The shrieks of death, through Berkeley's roofs that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing King!
She-wolf of France with unrelenting fangs,
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs
The scourge of Heaven. What terrors round him wait!
Amazement in his van, with flight combined,
And sorrow's faded form, and solitude behind.

II. 2.

"Mighty victor, mighty lord!
Low on his funeral couch he lies!

No pitying heart, no eye afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable warrior fled?
Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
The swarm, that in thy noontide beam were born?
Gone to salute the rising morn.
Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hushed in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

II. 3.

"Fill high the sparkling bowl,
The rich repast prepare,
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?
Long years of havock urge their destined course,
And through the kindred squadrons mow their way.
Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed,
Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame,

And spare the meek usurper's holy head.
Above, below, the rose of snow,
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread :
The bristled Boar in infant gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
Now, brothers, bending o'er th' accursèd loom,
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

III. 1.

"Edward, lo! to sudden fate
(Weave we the woof. The thread is spun)
Half of thy heart we consecrate.
(The web is wove. The work is done.)
Stay, oh, stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unblessed, unpitied, here to mourn :
In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height
Descending slow their glittering skirts unroll?
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight!
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.
All hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue, hail!

III. 2.

"Girt with many a baron bold
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;

And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old
In bearded majesty, appear.
In the midst a form divine!
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton line;
Her lion port, her awe-commanding face,
Attempered sweet to virgin grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air,
What strains of vocal transport round her play!
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear;
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and, soaring as she sings,
Waves in the eye of heaven her many-coloured wings.

III. 3.

"The verse adorn again
Fierce war, and faithful love,
And truth severe by fairy fiction drest.
In buskined measures move
Pale grief, and pleasing pain,
With horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.
A voice, as of the cherub choir,
Gales from blooming Eden bear;
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
That lost in long futurity expire.
Fond impious man, think'st thou yon sanguine cloud,
Raised by thy breath, has quenched the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,

And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me: with joy I see
The diff'rent doom our fates assign.
Be thine despair, and sceptred care;
To triumph and to die are mine."
He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

THE PASSIONS.

COLLINS.

First appeared in a volume of "Odes on several descriptive and allegoric subjects," dated 1747.

WHEN Music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Thronged around her magic cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the Muse's painting:
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturbed, delighted, raised, refined;
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fired,
Filled with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatched her instruments of sound;
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each (for Madness ruled the hour)
Would prove his own expressive power.
First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewildered laid,

And back recoiled, he knew not why,
E'en at the sound himself had made.
Next Anger rushed; his eyes on fire,
In lightnings owned his secret stings:
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hand the strings.
With woeful measures wan Despair
Low, sullen sounds his grief beguiled;
A solemn, strange, and mingled air;
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.
But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delightful measure?
Still it whispered promised pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
Still would her touch the strain prolong;
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She called on Echo still, through all the song;
And, where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,
And Hope enchanted smiled, and waved her golden hair.
And longer had she sung;—
But with a frown, Revenge impatient rose:
He threw his blood-stained sword in thunder down;
And with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe!

And, ever and anon, he beat
The doubling drum with furious heat;
And though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity, at his side,
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unaltered mien,
While each strained ball of sight seemed bursting from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fixed;
Sad proof of thy distressful state:
Of differing themes the veering song was mixed;
And now it courted Love, now raving called on Hate.

With eyes upraised, as one inspired,
Pale Melancholy sate retired;
And, from her wild sequestered seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Poured through the mellow horn her pensive soul:
And dashing soft from rocks around,
Bubbling runnels joined the sound;
Through glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,
Or o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
Round a holy calm diffusing,
Love of peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But oh! how altered was its sprightlier tone,
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow across her shoulder flung,

Her buskins gemmed with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call, to Faun and Dryad known!
The oak-crowned Sisters and their chaste-eyed Queen,
Satyrs and Sylvan Boys, were seen
Peeping from forth their alleys green:
Brown Exercise rejoiced to hear;
And Sport leapt up, and seized his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial:
He, with viny crown advancing,
First to the lively pipe his hand addrest;
But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best;
They would have thought who heard the strain
They saw, in Tempe's vale, her native maids,
Amidst the festal sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
While, as his flying fingers kissed the strings,
Love framed with Mirth a gay fantastic round:
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound;
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.
O Music! sphere-descended maid,
Friend of pleasure, Wisdom's aid!
Why, goddess! why to us denied,

Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As, in that loved Athenian bower,
You learned an all-commanding power,
Thy mimic soul, O nymph endeared,
Can well recall what then it heard;
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energetic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders in that godlike age
Fill thy recording Sister's page.
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age;
E'en all at once together found,
Cecilia's mingled world of sound.
Oh, bid our vain endeavours cease;
Revive the just designs of Greece;
Return in all thy simple state;
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

TO EVENING.

COLLINS.

Published in 1747; *but the text here given is that recovered by Mr. Moy Thomas from a miscellany of* 1748.

IF aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales;

O nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed;

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short shrill shriek, flits by on leathern wing;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers stealing through thy darkening vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit ;
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return !

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours and Elves
Who slept in flowers the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive Pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car ;

Then lead, calm votaress, where some sheety lake
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallowed pile,
Or upland fallows grey
Reflect its last cool gleam.

But when chill blustering winds or driving rain
Forbid my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That from the mountain's side
Views wilds and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires ;
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve ;
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light ;

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves ;
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes ;

So long, sure-found beneath the sylvan shed
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, rose-lipped Health,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And hymn thy favourite name !

ON THE POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND.

COLLINS.

Written from Chichester in the winter of 1749, *and addressed to Home, the author of "Douglas," whose acquaintance he had made at Winchester in the autumn of that year. It was first printed in* 1780.

HOME, thou return'st from Thames, whose Naiads long
Have seen thee lingering with a fond delay,
'Mid those soft friends, whose hearts, some future day,
Shall melt, perhaps, to hear thy tragic song.
Go, not unmindful of that cordial youth
Whom, long endeared, thou leavest by Lavant's side;
Together let us wish him lasting truth,
And joy untainted with his destined bride.
Go! nor regardless, while these numbers boast
My short-lived bliss, forget my social name;
But think, far off, how, on the southern coast,
I met thy friendship with an equal flame.
Fresh to that soil thou turn'st, whose every vale
Shall prompt the poet, and his song demand:
To thee thy copious subjects ne'er shall fail;
Thou need'st but take thy pencil to thy hand,
And paint what all believe, who own thy genial land.

There must thou wake perforce thy Doric quill;
'Tis Fancy's land to which thou set'st thy feet;
Where still, 'tis said, the fairy people meet,
Beneath each birken shade, on mead or hill.
There each trim lass, that skims the milky store,
To the swart tribes their creamy bowl allots;
By night they sip it round the cottage door.
While airy minstrels warble jocund notes.
There, every herd, by sad experience, knows
How, winged with fate, their elf-shot arrows fly,
When the sick ewe her summer food forgoes,
Or, stretched on earth, the heart-smit heifers lie.
Such airy beings awe the untutored swain:
Nor thou, though learned, his homelier thoughts neglect:
Let thy sweet Muse the rural faith sustain;
These are the themes of simple, sure effect,
That add new conquests to her boundless reign,
And fill, with double force, her heart-commanding strain.

E'en yet preserved, how often may'st thou hear,
Where to the pole the Boreal mountains run,
Taught by the father to his listening son,
Strange lays, whose power had charmed a Spenser's ear.
At every pause, before thy mind possest,
Old Runic bards shall seem to rise around,
With uncouth lyres, in many-coloured vest,
Their matted hair with boughs fantastic crowned:

Whether thou bid'st the well-taught hind repeat
The choral dirge, that mourns some chieftain brave,
When every shrieking maid her bosom beat,
And strewed with choicest herbs his scented grave;
Or whether, sitting in the shepherd's shiel,
Thou hear'st some sounding tale of war's alarms:
When at the bugle's call, with fire and steel,
The sturdy clans poured forth their brawny swarms,
And hostile brothers met, to prove each other's arms.

'Tis thine to sing, how, framing hideous spells,
In Skye's lone isle, the gifted wizard seer
Lodged in the wintry cave with "Fate's fell spear,"
Or in the depth of Uist's dark forest dwells:
How they, whose sight such dreary dreams engross,
With their own vision oft astonished droop,
When o'er the watery strath or quaggy moss
They see the gliding ghosts unbodied troop.
Or, if in sports, or on the festive green,
Their "destined" glance some fated youth descry,
Who now, perhaps, in lusty vigour seen,
And rosy health, shall soon lamented die.
For them the viewless forms of air obey,
Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair;
They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
And heartless, oft like moody Madness, stare
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare.

What though far off, from some dark dell espied,
His glimmering mazes cheer the excursive sight,
Yet turn, ye wanderers, turn your steps aside,
Nor trust the guidance of that faithless light;
For watchful, lurking 'mid the unrustling reed,
At those mirk hours the wily monster lies,
And listens oft to hear the passing steed,
And frequent round him rolls his sullen eyes,
If chance his savage wrath may some weak wretch surprise.

Ah, luckless swain, o'er all unblest indeed!
Whom late bewildered in the dank, dark fen,
Far from his flocks, and smoking hamlet, then!
To that sad spot where hums the sedgy weed:
On him, enraged, the fiend in angry mood
Shall never look with Pity's kind concern,
But instant, furious, raise the whelming flood
O'er its drowned banks, forbidding all return!
Or, if he meditate his wished escape,
To some dim hill that seems uprising near,
To his faint eye the grim and grisly shape,
In all its terrors clad, shall wild appear.
Meantime the watery surge shall round him rise,
Poured sudden forth from every swelling source!
What now remains but tears and hopeless sighs?
His fear-shook limbs have lost their youthly force,
And down the waves he floats, a pale and breathless corse!

For him in vain his anxious wife shall wait,
Or wander forth to meet him on his way;
For him in vain at to-fall of the day
His babes shall linger at the unclosing gate!
Ah, ne'er shall he return! Alone, if night
Her travelled limbs in broken slumbers steep,
With drooping willows drest, his mournful sprite
Shall visit sad, perchance, her silent sleep:
Then he, perhaps, with moist and watery hand,
Shall fondly seem to press her shuddering cheek,
And with his blue swoln face before her stand,
And, shivering cold, these piteous accents speak:
"Pursue, dear wife, thy daily toils pursue,
At dawn or dusk, industrious as before;
Nor e'er of me one helpless thought renew,
While I lie weltering on the osiered shore,
Drowned by the Kelpie's wrath, nor e'er shall aid thee more!"

Unbounded is thy range; with varied style
Thy Muse may, like those feathery tribes which spring
From their rude rocks, extend her skirting wing
Round the moist marge of each cold Hebrid isle,
To that hoar pile which still its ruin shows,
In whose small vaults a pigmy folk is found,
Whose bones the delver with his spade upthrows,
And culls them, wondering, from the hallowed ground

Or thither, where, beneath the showery west,
The mighty kings of three fair realms are laid;
Once foes, perhaps, together now they rest,
No slaves revere them, and no wars invade:
Yet frequent now, at midnight's solemn hour,
The rifted mounds their yawning cells unfold,
And forth the monarchs stalk with sovereign power,
In pageant robes, and wreathed with sheeny gold,
And on their twilight tombs aërial council hold.

But, oh! o'er all, forget not Kilda's race,
On whose bleak rocks, which brave the wasting tides,
Fair Nature's daughter, Virtue, yet abides.
Go! just as they, their blameless manners trace!
Then to my ear transmit some gentle song
Of those whose lives are yet sincere and plain,
Their bounded walks the rugged cliffs along,
And all their prospect but the wintry main.
With sparing temperance, at the needful time,
They drain the sainted spring; or, hunger-prest,
Along the Atlantic rock, undreading, climb,
And of its eggs despoil the solan's nest.
Thus, blest in primal innocence, they live
Sufficed, and happy with that frugal fare
Which tasteful toil and hourly danger give.
Hard is their shallow soil, and bleak and bare;
Nor ever vernal bee was heard to murmur there!

Nor need'st thou blush that such false themes engage
Thy gentle mind, of fairer stores possest :
For not alone they touch the village breast,
But filled, in elder time, the historic page.
There, Shakespeare's self, with every garland crowned,
In musing hour his wayward sisters found,
And with their terrors drest the magic scene.
From them he sung, when, 'mid his bold design,
Before the Scot, afflicted and aghast !
The shadowy kings of Banquo's fated line
Through the dark cave in gleamy pageant passed.
Proceed ! nor quit the tales which, simply told,
Could once so well my answering bosom pierce ;
Proceed, in forceful sounds and colours bold,
The native legends of thy land rehearse ;
To such adapt thy lyre and suit thy powerful verse.

In scenes like these, which, daring to depart
From sober truth, are still to nature true,
And call forth fresh delight to Fancy's view,
The Heroic Muse employed her Tasso's art !
How have I trembled, when, at Tancred's stroke,
Its gushing blood the gaping cypress poured !
When each live plant with mortal accents spoke,
And the wild blast upheaved the vanished sword !
How have I sat, when piped the pensive wind,
To hear his harp by British Fairfax strung !

Prevailing poet ! whose undoubting mind
Believed the magic wonders which he sung !
Hence, at each sound, imagination glows !
Hence his warm lay with softest sweetness flows !
Melting it flows, pure, numerous, strong, and clear,
And fills the impassioned heart, and wins the harmonious ear !

All hail, ye scenes that o'er my soul prevail !
Ye "spacious" friths and lakes, which, far away,
Are by smooth Annan filled, or pastoral Tay,
Or Don's romantic springs, at distance hail !
The time shall come, when I, perhaps, may tread
Your lowly glens, o'erhung with spreading broom ;
Or, o'er your stretching heaths, by Fancy led.
Then will I dress once more the faded bower
Where Jonson sat in Drummond's "classic" shade ;
Or crop, from Teviotdale, each "lyric flower,"
And mourn on Yarrow's banks, "where Willy's laid !"
Meantime, ye powers that on the plains which bore
The cordial youth, on Lothian's plains, attend !—
Where'er he dwell, on hill or lowly moor,
To him I lose, your kind protection lend,
And, touched with love like mine, preserve my absent friend !

ON LEAVING HOLLAND.

AKENSIDE.

In April, 1744, Akenside had gone to Leyden to take his degree of Doctor of Physic, which he received on the 16th of May of that year. He stayed in Holland only long enough to see his diploma dissertation through the press.

I. 1.

FAREWELL to Leyden's lonely bound,
The Belgian Muse's sober seat;
Where, dealing frugal gifts around
To all the favourites at her feet,
She trains the body's bulky frame
For passive, persevering toils;
And lest, from any prouder aim,
The daring mind should scorn her homely spoils,
She breathes maternal fogs to damp its restless flame.

I. 2.

Farewell the grave, pacific air,
Where never mountain zephyr blew:
The marshy levels lank and bare,
Which Pan, which Ceres never knew:
The Naiads, with obscene attire,
Urging in vain their urns to flow;
While round them chaunt the croaking choir,

And haply soothe some lover's prudent woe,
Or prompt some restive bard and modulate his lyre.

I. 3.

Farewell, ye nymphs, whom sober care of gain
Snatched in your cradles from the god of Love:
She rendered all his boasted arrows vain;
And all his gifts did he in spite remove.
Ye too, the slow-eyed fathers of the land,
With whom dominion steals from hand to hand,
Unowned, undignified by public choice,
I go where Liberty to all is known,
And tells a monarch on his throne,
He reigns not but by her preserving voice.

II. 1.

O my loved England, when with thee
Shall I sit down, to part no more?
Far from this pale, discoloured sea,
That sleeps upon the reedy shore:
When shall I plough thy azure tide?
When on thy hills the flocks admire,
Like mountain snows; till down their side
I trace the village and the sacred spire,
While bowers and copses green the golden slope divide.

II. 2.

Ye nymphs who guard the pathless grove,
Ye blue-eyed sisters of the streams,
With whom I wont at morn to rove,
With whom at noon I talked in dreams;
Oh! take me to your haunts again,
The rocky spring, the greenwood glade;
To guide my lonely footsteps deign,
To prompt my slumbers in the murmuring shade,
And soothe my vacant ear with many an airy strain.

II. 3.

And thou, my faithful harp, no longer mourn
Thy drooping master's inauspicious hand:
Now brighter skies and fresher gales return,
Now fairer maids thy melody demand.
Daughters of Albion, listen to my lyre.
O Phœbus, guardian of the Aonian choir,
Why sounds not mine harmonious as thy own,
When all the virgin deities above,
With Venus and with Juno, move
In concert round the Olympian father's throne?

III. 1.

Thee too, protectress of my lays,
Elate with whose majestic call,

Above degenerate Latium's praise,
Above the slavish boast of Gaul,
I dare from impious thrones reclaim,
And wanton sloth's ignoble charms,
The honours of a poet's name,
To Somers' counsels, or to Hampden's arms,
Thee, Freedom, I rejoin, and bless thy genuine flame.

III. 2.

Great citizen of Albion. Thee
Heroic Valour still attends,
And useful Science, pleased to see
How Art her studious toil extends:
While Truth, diffusing from on high
A lustre unconfined as day,
Fills and commands the public eye;
Till, pierced and sinking by her powerful ray,
Tame Faith, and monkish Awe, like nightly demons, fly.

III. 3.

Hence the whole land the patriot's ardour shares:
Hence dread Religion dwells with social Joy;
And holy passions and unsullied cares,
In youth, in age, domestic life employ.
O fair Britannia, hail! with partial love,
The tribes of men their native seats approve,

Unjust and hostile to each foreign fame :
But when for generous minds and manly laws
A nation holds her prime applause,
There public zeal shall all reproof disclaim.

THE FIRST OF APRIL.

WARTON. *Probably composed before* 1760, *but printed in* 1777.

WITH dalliance rude young Zephyr woos
Coy May. Full oft with kind excuse
The boisterous boy the Fair denies,
Or, with a scornful smile complies.

Mindful of disaster past,
And shrinking at the northern blast,
The sleety storm returning still,
The morning hoar, the evening chill;
Reluctant comes the timid Spring.
Scarce a bee, with airy ring,
Murmurs the blossom'd boughs around,
That clothe the garden's southern bound:
Scarce a sickly straggling flower
Decks the rough castle's rifted tower:
Scarce the hardy primrose peeps
From the dark dell's entangled steeps:
O'er the field of waving broom,

Slowly shoots the golden bloom :
And, but by fits, the furze-clad dale
Tinctures the transitory gale.
While from the shrubbery's naked maze,
Where the vegetable blaze
Of Flora's brightest 'broidery shone,
Every chequer'd charm is flown ;
Save that the lilac hangs to view
Its bursting gems in clusters blue.

Scant along the ridgy land
The beans their new-born ranks expand :
The fresh-turn'd soil with tender blades
Thinly the sprouting barley shades :
Fringing the forest's devious edge,
Half rob'd appears the hawthorn hedge,
Or to the distant eye displays
Weakly green its budding sprays.

The swallow, for a moment seen,
Skims in haste the village green :
From the grey moor, on feeble wing,
The screaming plovers idly spring :
The butterfly, gay-painted soon,
Explores awhile the tepid noon ;
And fondly trusts its tender dyes
To fickle suns, and flattering skies.

Fraught with a transient, frozen shower,
If a cloud should haply lower,
Sailing o'er the landscape dark,
Mute on a sudden is the lark;
But when gleams the sun again
O'er the pearl-besprinkled plain,
And from behind his watery vail
Looks through the thin-descending hail;
She mounts, and lessening to the sight,
Salutes the blythe return of light,
And high her tuneful track pursues
'Mid the dim rainbow's scatter'd hues.

Where in venerable rows
Widely waving oaks inclose
The moat of yonder antique hall,
Swarm the rooks with clamorous call;
And to the toils of nature true,
Wreathe their capacious nests anew.

Musing through the lawny park,
The lonely poet loves to mark,
How various greens in faint degrees
Tinge the tall groups of various trees;
While, careless of the changing year,
The pine cerulean, never sere,
Towers distinguish'd from the rest,
And proudly vaunts her winter vest.

Within some whispering osier isle,
Where Glym's low banks neglected smile;
And each trim meadow still retains
The wintry torrent's oozy stains:
Beneath a willow, long forsook,
The fisher seeks his custom'd nook;
And bursting through the crackling sedge
That crowns the current's cavern'd edge,
He startles from the bordering wood
The bashful wild-duck's early brood.

O'er the broad downs, a novel race,
Frisk the lambs with faltering pace,
And with eager bleatings fill
The foss that skirts the beacon'd hill.

His free-born vigour yet unbroke
To lordly man's usurping yoke,
The bounding colt forgets to play,
Basking beneath the noontide ray,
And stretch'd among the daisies pied
Of a green dingle's sloping side:
While far beneath, where nature spreads
Her boundless length of level meads,
In loose luxuriance taught to stray,
A thousand tumbling rills inlay
With silver veins the vale, or pass
Redundant through the sparkling grass.

Yet, in these presages rude,
Midst her pensive solitude,
Fancy, with prophetic glance,
Sees the teeming months advance;
The field, the forest, green and gay,
The dappled slope, the tedded hay;
Sees the reddening orchard blow,
The harvest wave, the vintage flow:
Sees June unfold his glossy robe
Of thousand hues o'er all the globe:
Sees Ceres grasp her crown of corn,
And Plenty load her ample horn.

BOADICEA.

COWPER. *From the "Poems" of 1782.*

WHEN the British warrior Queen,
Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought with an indignant mien,
Counsel of her country's gods:

Sage beneath a spreading oak,
Sat the Druid, hoary chief,
Ev'ry burning word he spoke
Full of rage, and full of grief.

"Princess! if our aged eyes
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
'Tis because resentment ties
All the terrors of our tongues.

"Rome shall perish,—write that word
In the blood that she has spilt,—

Perish, hopeless and abhorr'd,
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

"Rome for empire far renown'd
Tramples on a thousand States;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground:
Hark! the Gaul is at her gates!

"Other Romans shall arise,
Heedless of a soldier's name;
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,—
Harmony the path to fame.

"Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Armed with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

"Regions Cæsar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway;
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they."

Such the bard's prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending, as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She with all a monarch's pride
  Felt them in her bosom glow;
Rushed to battle, fought, and died:
  Dying, hurled them at the foe.

"Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
  Heaven awards the vengeance due;
Empire is on us bestowed,
  Shame and ruin wait for you."

IN IMITATION OF ALCÆUS.

JONES.

Written in 1781, in a paroxysm of indignation against the American war, the slave-trade, and the general decline of British liberty. This is the best of the poems of Sir William Jones.

WHAT constitutes a State?
Not high-raised battlement or laboured mound,
Thick wall or moated gate;
Not cities proud with spires and turrets crowned;
Not bays and broad-armed ports,
Where, laughing at the storm, rich navies ride;
Not starred and spangled Courts,
Where low-browed baseness wafts perfume to pride.
No: men, high-minded men,
With powers as far above dull brutes endued,
In forest, brake or den,
As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude;
Men who their duties know,
But know their rights, and, knowing, dare maintain,
Prevent the long-aimed blow,
And crush the tyrant while they rend the chain:
These constitute a State,
And sovereign Law, that State's collected will,

O'er thrones and globes elate
Sits empress, crowning good, repressing ill;
Smit by her sacred frown,
The fiend, Dissention, like a vapour sinks,
And e'en the all-dazzling Crown
Hides his faint rays, and at her bidding shrinks.
Such was this heaven-loved isle,
Than Lesbos fairer, and the Cretan shore!
No more shall Freedom smile?
Shall Britons languish, and be men no more?
Since all must life resign,
Those sweet rewards which decorate the brave,
'Tis folly to decline,
And sink inglorious to the silent grave.

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

WORDSWORTH. *Begun in* 1803, *finished in* 1806.

"The child is father of the man:
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety."

I.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparell'd in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more!

II.

The rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the rose;
The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;

The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath pass'd away a glory from the earth.

III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief;
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong.
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong:
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday!
Thou child of joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy shepherd boy!

IV.

Ye blessèd creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;

My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
Oh, evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May-morning;
And the children are culling,
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm:—
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
But there's a tree, of many, one,
A single field which I have look'd upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
The pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,

But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home :
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy ;
The youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended ;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII.

Behold the child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' darling of a pigmy size !

See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the persons, down to palsied age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy soul's immensity;
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,

That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
A presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring th' inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX.

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That Nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed

Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast :—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise ;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings ;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised :
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence : truths that wake,
To perish never ;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor man nor boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy !
Hence in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea

Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X.

Then sing, ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI.

And O, ye fountains, meadows, hills, and groves,
Forebode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the brooks which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born day
Is lovely yet;
The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

TO DUTY.

WORDSWORTH. *Written in* 1805.

STERN daughter of the voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free;
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot;
Who do thy work, and know it not:
O, if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power, around them cast.

Serene will be our days, and bright
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security;
And they a blissful course may hold,
Even now, who not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried,
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust;
And oft, when in my heart has heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferr'd
The task in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control,
But in the quietness of thought;
Me this uncharter'd freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance desires:
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face;
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds;
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh! let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And, in the light of truth, thy bondman let me live!

TO LYCORIS.

WORDSWORTH. *Dated May*, 1817.

AN age hath been when earth was proud
Of lustre too intense
To be sustained ; and mortals bowed
The front in self-defence.
Who, then, if Dian's crescent gleamed,
Or Cupid's sparkling arrow streamed,
While on the wing the urchin played,
Could fearlessly approach the shade?
Enough for one soft vernal day,
If I, a bard of ebbing time,
And nurtured in a fickle clime,
May haunt this hornèd bay ;
Whose amorous water multiplies
The flitting halcyon's vivid dyes ;
And smooths her liquid breast—to show
These swan-like specks of mountain snow,
White as the pair that slid along the plains
Of heaven when Venus held the reins !

In youth we love the darksome lawn
Brushed by the owlet's wing;
Then, twilight is preferred to dawn,
And autumn to the spring.
Sad fancies do we then affect,
In luxury of disrespect
To our own prodigal excess
Of too familiar happiness.
Lycoris (if such name befit
Thee, thee, my life's celestial sign!)
When nature marks the year's decline,
Be ours to welcome it;
Pleased with the harvest hope that runs
Before the path of milder suns,
Pleased while the sylvan world displays
Its ripeness to the feeding gaze;
Pleased when the sullen winds resound the knell
Of the resplendent miracle.

But something whispers to my heart
That, as we downward tend
Lycoris! life requires an art
To which our souls must bend;
A skill—to balance and supply;
And ere the flowing fount be dry,
As soon it must, a sense to sip,
Or drink with no fastidious lip.

Then welcome, above all, the guest
Whose smiles diffused o'er land and sea,
Seem to recall the Deity
Of youth into the breast!
May pensive autumn ne'er present
A claim to her disparagement!
While blossoms and the budding spray
Inspire us in our own decay;
Still as we nearer draw to life's dark goal,
Be hopeful spring the favourite of the soul.

FRANCE.

COLERIDGE.

Composed at Stowey, in Somerset, in February, 1797, and printed with "Fears in Solitude" of 1798.

I.

YE Clouds! that far above me float and pause,
Whose pathless march no mortal may control!
Ye Ocean-Waves! that, wheresoe'er ye roll,
Yield homage only to eternal laws!
Ye Woods! that listen to the night-birds' singing,
Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,
Save when your own imperious branches swinging
Have made a solemn music of the wind!
Where, like a man beloved of God,
Through glooms, which never woodman trod,
How oft, pursuing fancies holy,
My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds I wound,
Inspired, beyond the guess of folly,
By each rude shape and wild unconquerable sound!
O ye loud Waves! and O ye Forests high
And O ye Clouds that far above me soared!
Thou rising Sun! thou blue rejoicing Sky!
Yea, every thing that is and will be free!

Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,
With what deep worship I have still adored
The spirit of divinest Liberty.

II.

When France in wrath her giant-limbs upreared,
And with that oath, which smote air, earth, and sea,
Stamped her strong foot and said she would be free,
Bear witness for me, how I hoped and feared!
With what a joy my lofty gratulation
Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band:
And when to whelm the disenchanted nation,
Like fiends embattled by a wizard's wand,
The Monarchs marched in evil day,
And Britain joined the dire array;
Though dear her shores and circling ocean,
Though many friendships, many youthful loves,
Had swol'n the patriot emotion,
And flung a magic light o'er all her hills and groves;
Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang defeat
To all that braved the tyrant-quelling lance,
And shame too long delayed and vain retreat!
For ne'er, O Liberty! with partial aim
I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy flame;
But blessed the pæans of delivered France,
And hung my head and wept at Britain's name.

III.

'And what,' I said, 'though Blasphemy's loud scream
With that sweet music of deliverance strove!
Though all the fierce and drunken passions wove
A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's dream!
Ye storms, that round the dawning east assembled,
The Sun was rising, though ye hid his light!'
And when, to soothe my soul, that hoped and trembled,
The dissonance ceased, and all seemed calm and bright;
When France her front deep-scarr'd and gory
Concealed with clustering wreaths of glory;
When, insupportably advancing,
Her arm made mockery of the warrior's tramp;
While timid looks of fury glancing,
Domestic treason, crushed beneath her fatal stamp,
Writhed like a wounded dragon in his gore;
Then I reproached my fears that would not flee;
'And soon,' I said, 'shall Wisdom teach her lore
In the low huts of them that toil and groan!
And, conquering by her happiness alone,
Shall France compel the nations to be free,
Till Love and Joy look round, and call the Earth their own.

IV.

Forgive me, Freedom! O forgive those dreams!
I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament,
From bleak Helvetia's icy caverns sent—

I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained streams !
Heroes, that for your peaceful country perished,
And ye that, fleeing, spot your mountain-snows
With bleeding wounds ; forgive me, that I cherished
One thought that ever blessed your cruel foes !
To scatter rage, and traitorous guilt,
Where Peace her jealous home had built ;
A patriot-race to disinherit
Of all that made their stormy wilds so dear ;
And with inexpiable spirit
To taint the bloodless freedom of the mountaineer—
O France, that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,
And patriot only in pernicious toils,
Are these thy boasts, Champion of humankind ?
To mix with Kings in the low lust of sway,
Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey ;
To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
From freemen torn ; to tempt and to betray ?

V.

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in vain,
Slaves by their own compulsion ! In mad game
They burst their manacles and wear the name
Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain !
O Liberty ! with profitless endeavour
Have I pursued thee, many a weary hour ;
But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain, nor ever

Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power.
Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee
(Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays thee),
Alike from Priestcraft's harpy minions,
And factious Blasphemy's obscener slaves,
Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,
The guide of homeless winds, and playmate of the waves;
And there I felt thee!—on that sea-cliff's verge,
Whose pines, scarce travelled by the breeze above,
Had made one murmur with the distant surge!
Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
And shot my being through earth, sea, and air,
Possessing all things with intensest love,
O Liberty! my spirit felt thee there.

TO AN INDIAN GOLD COIN.

LEYDEN.

Written in Cherical, on the coast of Malabar, where Leyden was acting as assistant surgeon in 1803. *It was composed very shortly before the condition of the young poet's health obliged his removal to the more salubrious station of Prince of Wales Island.*

SLAVE of the dark and dirty mine!
What vanity has brought thee here?
How can I love to see thee shine
So bright, whom I have bought so dear?
The tent-ropes, flapping, lone I hear
For twilight converse, arm in arm;
The jackal's shriek bursts on mine ear
When mirth and music wont to charm.

By Cherical's dark wandering streams,
Where cane-tufts shadow all the wild,
Sweet visions haunt my waking dreams
Of Teviot loved while still a child,
Of castled rocks stupendous piled
By Esk or Eden's classic wave,
Where loves of youth and friendships smiled,
Uncursed by thee, vile yellow slave!

Fade, day-dreams sweet, from memory fade!
The perished bliss of youth's first prime,
That once so bright on fancy played,
Revives no more in after-time.
Far from my sacred natal clime
I haste to an untimely grave;
The daring thoughts that soared sublime
Are sunk in ocean's southern wave.

Slave of the mine! thy yellow light
Gleams baleful as the tomb fire drear.
A gentle vision comes by night
My lonely widowed heart to cheer:
Her eyes are dim with many a tear,
That once were guiding stars to mine;
Her fond heart throbs with many a fear!
I cannot bear to see thee shine.

For thee, for thee, vile yellow slave,
I left a heart that loved me true!
I crossed the tedious ocean wave,
To roam in climes unkind and new.
The cold wind of the stranger blew
Chill on my withered heart; the grave
Dark and unlimely met my view—
And all for thee, vile yellow slave!

Ha ! com'st thou now so late to mock
A wanderer's banished heart forlorn,
Now that his frame the lightning shock
Of sun-rays tipt with death has borne ?
From love, from friendship, country, torn,
To memory's fond regrets the prey ;
Vile slave, thy yellow dross I scorn !
Go mix thee with thy kindred clay !

TO JOSEPH ABLETT.

LANDOR.

To the text of this ode, as invaluable poetically and autobiographically, I have restored, from Forster's "Life," the discarded MS. couplet referring to Coleridge. I do not know by what splenetic caprice Landor omitted to print it.

LORD of the Celtic dells,
Where Clwyd listens as his minstrel tells
Of Arthur or Pendragon, or perchance
The plumes of flashy France,
Or, in dark region, far across the main,
Far as Granada in the world of Spain,

Warriors untold to Saxon ear,
Until their steel-clad spirits reappear;
How happy were the hours that held
Thy friend (long absent from his native home)
Amid thy scenes with thee! how wide afield
From all past cares and all to come!

What hath Ambition's feverish grasp, what hath
Inconstant Fortune, panting Hope;

What Genius, that should cope
With the heart-whispers in that path
Winding so idly, where the idler stream
Flings at the white-haired poplars gleam for gleam?

Ablett, of all the days
My sixty summers ever knew,
Pleasant as there have been no few,
Memory not one surveys
Like those we spent together. Wisely spent
Are they alone that leave the soul content.

Together we have visited the men
Whom Pictish pirates vainly would have drown'd;
Ah! shall we ever clasp the hand again
That gave the British harp its truest sound?
Coleridge hath heard the call, and bathes in bliss
Among the spirits that have power like his;
Live Derwent's guest! and thou by Grasmere springs!
Serene creators of immortal things.

And live thou too for happier days
Whom Dryden's force and Spenser's fays
Have heart and soul possessed;
Growl in grim London he who will,
Revisit thou Maiano's hill
And swell with pride his sunburnt breast.

Old Redi in his easy chair
With varied chant awaits thee there,
And here are voices in the grove
Aside my house, that make me think
Bacchus is coming down to drink
To Ariadne's love.

But whither am I borne away
From thee, to whom began my lay?
Courage! I am not yet quite lost;
I stept aside to greet my friends;
Believe me soon the greeting ends
I know but three or four at most.

Deem not that Time hath borne too hard
Upon the fortunes of thy bard,
Leaving me only three or four:
'Tis my old number; dost thou start
At such a tale? In what man's heart
Is there fireside for more?

I never courted friends or Fame;
She pouted at me long, at last she came,
And threw her arms around my neck and said,
"Take what hath been for years delayed,
And fear not that the leaves will fall
One hour the earlier from thy coronal."

Ablett! thou knowest with what even hand
I waved away the offer'd seat
Among the clambering, clattering, stilted great,
The rulers of our land;
Nor crowds nor kings can lift me up,
Nor sweeten Pleasure's purer cup.

Thou knowest how, and why, are dear to me
My citron groves of Fiesole,
My chirping Affrico, my beechwood nook,
My Naiads, with feet only in the brook,
Which runs away and giggles in their faces,
Yet there they sit, nor sigh for other places.

'Tis not Pelasgian wall
By him made sacred whom alone
'Twere not profane to call
The bard divine, nor (thrown
Far under me) Valdarno, nor the crest
Of Valombrosa in the crimson east.

Here can I sit or roam at will;
Few trouble me, few wish me ill,
Few come across me, few too near;
Here all my wishes make their stand,
Here ask I no one's voice or hand
Scornful of favour, ignorant of fear.

Yon vine upon the maple bough
Flouts at the hearty wheat below;
Away her venal wines the wise man sends,
While those of lower stem he brings
From inmost treasure vault, and sings
Their worth and age among his chosen friends.

Behold our Earth, most nigh the sun
Her zone least opens to the genial heat,
But farther off her veins more freely run:
'Tis thus with those that whirl about the great;
The nearest shrink and shiver, we remote
May open-breasted blow the pastoral oat.

TO WINTER.

CAMPBELL.

Written at Ratisbon in the winter of 1800, *just before the battle of Hohenlinden.*

WHEN first the fiery-mantled sun
His heavenly race began to run,
Round the earth and ocean blue
His children four the Seasons flew :—
First in green apparel dancing,
The young Spring smiled with angel grace ;
Rosy Summer, next advancing,
Rushed into her sire's embrace :—
Her bright-haired sire, who bade her keep
For ever nearest to his smiles,
On Calpe's olive-shaded steep,
On India's citron-covered isles ;
More remote and buxom brown,
The Queen of vintage bowed before his throne ;
A rich pomegranate gemmed her crown
A ripe sheaf bound her zone.

But howling Winter fled afar
To hills that prop the polar star;
And loves on deer-borne car to ride,
With barren darkness by his side,
Round the shore where loud Lofoden
Whirls to death the roaring whale,
Round the hall where Runic Odin
Howls his war-song to the gale—
Save when adown the ravaged globe
He travels on his native storm,
Deflowering Nature's grassy robe
And trampling on her faded form;
Till light's returning lord assume
The shaft that drives him to his polar field,
Of power to pierce his raven plume,
And crystal-covered shield.

Oh sire of storms! whose savage ear
The Lapland drum delights to hear,—
When Frenzy with her bloodshot eye
Implores thy dreadful deity,
Archangel power of desolation!
(Fast descending as thou art)
Say, hath mortal invocation
Spells to touch thy stony heart?
Then sullen Winter! hear my prayer,
And gently rule the ruined year

Nor chill the wanderer's bosom bare,
  Nor freeze the wretch's falling tear;
To shivering want's unmantled bed
  Thy horror-breathing agues cease to lend,
And mildly on the orphan head
  Of Innocence descend.

But chiefly spare, O king of clouds!
The sailor on his airy shrouds,
When wrecks and beacons strew the steep,
And spectres walk along the deep;
Milder yet thy snowy breezes
  Pour on yonder tented shores
Where the Rhine's broad billow freezes
  Or the dark brown Danube roars.
Oh winds of winter! list ye there
  To many a deep and dying groan?
Or start ye demons of the midnight air,
  At shrieks and thunders louder than your own?
Alas! even your unhallowed breath
  May spare the victim fallen low,
But man will ask no truce to death,
  No bounds to human woe.

ON VENICE.

BYRON.

Composed at Venice in 1818, *and appended to "Mazeppa" in the thin volume of* 1819.

I.

OH Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls
Are level with the waters, there shall be
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,
A loud lament along the sweeping sea!
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,
What should thy sons do?—anything but weep:
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.
In contrast with their fathers—as the slime,
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping streets.
Oh! agony—that centuries should reap
No mellower harvest! Thirteen hundred years
Of wealth and glory turn'd to dust and tears,
And every monument the stranger meets,
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;

And even the Lion all subdued appears,
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along
The soft waves, once all musical to song,
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng
Of gondolas—and to the busy hum
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds
Were but the overbeating of the heart,
And flow of too much happiness, which needs
The aid of age to turn its course apart
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.
But these are better than the gloomy errors,
The weeds of nations in their last decay,
When Vice walks forth with her unsoften'd terrors,
And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay;
And Hope is nothing but a false delay,
The sick man's lightning half an hour ere death,
When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,
And apathy of limb, the dull beginning
Of the cold staggering race which Death is winning,
Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away;
Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,
To him appears renewal of his breath,
And freedom the mere numbness of his chain;
And then he talks of life, and how again

He feels his spirit soaring—albeit weak,
And of the fresher air, which he would seek :
And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,
That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,
And so the film comes o'er him, and the dizzy
Chamber swims round and round, and shadows busy,
At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,
Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,
And all is ice and blackness,—and the earth
That which it was the moment ere our birth.

II.

There is no hope for nations !—Search the page
Of many thousand years—the daily scene,
The flow and ebb of each recurring age,
The everlasting *to be* which *hath been*,
Hath taught us nought, or little : still we lean
On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear
Our strength away in wrestling with the air :
For 'tis our nature strikes us down : the beasts
Slaughter'd in hourly hecatombs for feasts
Are of as high an order—they must go
Even where their driver goads them, though to slaughter.
Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,
What have they given your children in return ?
A heritage of servitude and woes,
A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows.

What! do not yet the red-hot plough-shares burn,
O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,
And deem this proof of loyalty the *real;*
Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,
And glorying as you tread the glowing bars?
All that your sires have left you, all that Time
Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,
Spring from a different theme! Ye see and read,
Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed!
Save the few spirits who, despite of all,
And worse than all, the sudden crimes engender'd
By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,
And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tender'd,
Gushing from Freedom's fountains, when the crowd,
Madden'd with centuries of drought, are loud,
And trample on each other to obtain
The cup which brings oblivion of a chain
Heavy and sore, in which long yoked they plough'd
The sand,—or if there sprung the yellow grain,
'Twas not for them, their necks were too much bow'd,
And their dead palates chew'd the cud of pain:
Yes! the few spirits,—who, despite of deeds
Which they abhor, confound not with the cause
Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,
Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite
But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth
With all her seasons to repair the blight

With a few summers, and again put forth
Cities and generations—fair, when free—
For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee!

III.

Glory and Empire! once upon these towers
With Freedom, godlike Triad! how ye sate!
The league of mightiest nations, in those hours
When Venice was an envy, might abate,
But did not quench her spirit; in her fate
All were enwrapp'd; the feasted monarchs knew
And loved their hostess, nor could learn to hate,
Although they humbled—with the kingly few
The many felt, for from all days and climes
She was the voyager's worship; even her crimes
Were of the softer order—born of Love,
She drank no blood, nor fatten'd on the dead,
But gladden'd where her harmless conquests spread;
For these restored the Cross, that from above
Hallow'd her sheltering banners, which incessant
Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,
Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may thank
The city it has clothed in chains, which clank
Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe
The name of Freedom to her glorious struggles;
Yet she but shares with them a common woe,
And call'd the 'kingdom' of a conquering foe,

But knows what all—and, most of all, *we* know—
With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles!

IV.

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone
O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;
Venice is crush'd, and Holland deigns to own
A sceptre, and endures the purple robe;
If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
His chainless mountains, 'tis but for a time,
For tyranny of late is cunning grown,
And in its own good season tramples down
The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,
Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean
Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion
Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and
Bequeath'd—a heritage of heart and hand,
And proud distinction from each other land,
Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's motion,
As if his senseless sceptre were a wand
Full of the magic of exploded science—
Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,
Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sublime,
Above the far Atlantic!—She has taught
Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,
The floating fence of Albion's feebler crag,
May strike to those whose red right hands have bought

Rights cheaply earn'd with blood. Still, still for ever,
Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,
That it should flow, and overflow, than creep
Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,
Damm'd like the dull canal with locks and chains,
And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,
Three paces, and then faltering:—better be
Where the extinguish'd Spartans still are free,
In their proud charnel of Thermopylæ,
Than stagnate in our marsh,—or o'er the deep
Fly, and one current to the ocean add,
One spirit to the souls our fathers had,
One freeman more, America, to thee!

TO THE WEST WIND.

SHELLEY.

Shelley says: "This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno near Florence [in 1819], and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapours which pour down the autumnal rains."

I.

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being.
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O, thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving every where ;
Destroyer and preserver ; hear, O, hear !

II.

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning : there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst : O, hear !

III.

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystàlline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day

All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them ! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves : O, hear !

IV.

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear ;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee ;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O, uncontrollable ! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seemed a vision ; I would ne'er have striven.

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

V.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O, wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

TO A SKYLARK.

SHELLEY.

Printed with "Prometheus Unbound" in 1820, *and assigned by Mrs. Shelley to that year.*

HAIL to thee, blithe spirit !
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire ;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
Thou dost float and run ;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven,
In the broad day-light
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,

Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
In aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingèd thieves:

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
oyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass:

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine :
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymenæal,
Or triumphal chaunt,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be :
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee :
Thou lovest ; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep

Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

TO LIBERTY.

SHELLEY. *Printed with "Prometheus Unbound" in* 1820.

I.

A GLORIOUS people vibrated again :
The lightning of the nations, Liberty,
From heart to heart, from tower to tower, o'er Spain,
Scattering contagious fire into the sky,
Gleamed. My soul spurned the chains of its dismay,
And, in the rapid plumes of song,
Clothed itself, sublime and strong;
As a young eagle soars the morning clouds among,
Hovering in verse o'er its accustomed prey ;
Till from its station in the heaven of fame
The Spirit's whirlwind rapt it, and the ray
Of the remotest sphere of living flame
Which paves the void was from behind it flung,
As foam from a ship's swiftness, when there came
A voice out of the deep : I will record the same.

II.

The Sun and the serenest Moon sprang forth :
The burning stars of the abyss were hurled

Into the depths of heaven. The dædal earth,
That island in the ocean of the world,
Hung in its cloud of all-sustaining air :
But this divinest universe
Was yet a chaos and a curse,
For thou wert not : but power from worst producing worse,
The spirit of the beasts was kindled there,
And of the birds, and of the watery forms,
And there was war among them, and despair
Within them, raging without truce or terms :
The bosom of their violated nurse
Groaned, for beasts warred on beasts, and worms on worms,
And men on men ; each heart was as a hell of storms.

III.

Man, the imperial shape, then multiplied
His generations under the pavilion
Of the Sun's throne : palace and pyramid,
Temple and prison, to many a swarming million,
Were, as to mountain-wolves their rugged caves.
This human living multitude
Was savage, cunning, blind, and rude,
For thou wert not ; but o'er the populous solitude,
Like one fierce cloud over a waste of waves,
Hung Tyranny ; beneath, sate deified
The sister-pest, congregator of slaves ;

Into the shadow of her pinions wide
Anarchs and priests who feed on gold and blood,
Till with the stain their inmost souls are dyed,
Drove the astonished herds of men from every side.

IV.

The nodding promontories, and blue isles,
And cloud-like mountains, and dividuous waves
Of Greece, basked glorious in the open smiles
Of favoring heaven : from their enchanted caves
Prophetic echoes flung dim melody
On the unapprehensive wild ;
The vine, the corn, the olive mild,
Grew savage yet, to human use unreconciled ;
And, like unfolded flowers beneath the sea,
Like the man's thought dark in the infant's brain,
Like aught that is which wraps what is to be,
Art's deathless dreams lay veiled by many a vein
Of Parian stone ; and yet a speechless child,
Verse murmured, and Philosophy did strain
Her lidless eyes for thee ; when o'er the Ægean main

V.

Athens arose : a city such as vision
Builds from the purple crags and silver towers
Of battlemented cloud, as in derision
Of kingliest masonry : the ocean-floors

Pave it; the evening sky pavilions it;
Its portals are inhabited
By thunder-zonèd winds, each head
Within its cloudy wings with sunfire garlanded,
A divine work! Athens diviner yet
Gleamed with its crest of columns, on the will
Of man, as on a mount of diamond, set;
For thou wert, and thine all-creative skill
Peopled with forms that mock the eternal dead
In marble immortality, that hill
Which was thine earliest throne and latest oracle.

VI.

Within the surface of Time's fleeting river
Its wrinkled image lies, as then it lay
Immovably unquiet, and for ever
It trembles, but it cannot pass away!
The voices of thy bards and sages thunder
With an earth-awakening blast
Through the caverns of the past;
Religion veils her eyes; Oppression shrinks aghast:
A wingèd sound of joy, and love, and wonder,
Which soars where Expectation never flew,
Rending the veil of space and time asunder!
One ocean feeds the clouds, and streams, and dew;
One sun illumines heaven; one spirit vast

With life and love makes chaos ever new,
As Athens doth the world with thy delight renew.

VII.

Then Rome was, and from thy deep bosom fairest,
Like a wolf-cub from a Cadmæan Mænad,
She drew the milk of greatness, though thy dearest
From that Elysian food was yet unweanèd;
And many a deed of terrible uprightness
By thy sweet love was sanctified;
And in thy smile, and by thy side,
Saintly Camillus lived, and firm Atilius died.
But when tears stained thy robe of vestal whiteness,
And gold profaned thy capitolian throne,
Thou didst desert, with spirit-wingèd lightness,
The senate of the tyrants: they sunk prone
Slaves of one tyrant: Palatinus sighed
Faint echoes of Ionian song; that tone
Thou didst delay to hear, lamenting to disown.

VIII.

From what Hyrcanian glen or frozen hill,
Or piny promontory of the Arctic main,
Or utmost islet inaccessible,
Didst thou lament the ruin of thy reign,
Teaching the woods and waves, and desart rocks,

And every Naiad's ice-cold urn,
To talk in echoes sad and stern,
Of that sublimest lore which man had dared unlearn?
For neither didst thou watch the wizard flocks
Of the Scald's dreams, nor haunt the Druid's sleep.
What if the tears rained through thy shattered locks
Were quickly dried? for thou didst groan, not weep,
When from its sea of death to kill and burn,
The Galilean serpent forth did creep,
And made thy world an undistinguishable heap.

IX.

A thousand years the Earth cried, Where art thou?
And then the shadow of thy coming fell
On Saxon Alfred's olive-cinctured brow:
And many a warrior-peopled citadel,
Like rocks which fire lifts out of the flat deep,
Arose in sacred Italy,
Frowning o'er the tempestuous sea
Of kings, and priests, and slaves, in tower-crowned majesty;
That multitudinous anarchy did sweep,
And burst around their walls, like idle foam,
Whilst from the human spirit's deepest deep
Strange melody with love and awe struck dumb
Dissonant arms; and Art, which cannot die,

With divine wand traced on our earthly home
Fit imagery to pave heaven's everlasting dome.

X.

Thou huntress swifter than the Moon! thou terror
Of the world's wolves! thou bearer of the quiver,
Whose sunlike shafts pierce tempest-wingèd Error,
As light may pierce the clouds when they dissever
In the calm regions of the orient day!
Luther caught thy wakening glance,
Like lightning, from his leaden lance
Reflected, it dissolved the visions of the trance
In which, as in a tomb, the nations lay;
And England's prophets hailed thee as their queen,
In songs whose music cannot pass away,
Though it must flow for ever: not unseen
Before the spirit-sighted countenance
Of Milton didst thou pass, from the sad scene
Beyond whose night he saw, with a dejected mien.

XI.

The eager hours and unreluctant years
As on a dawn-illumined mountain stood,
Trampling to silence their loud hopes and fears,
Darkening each other with their multitude,
And cried aloud, Liberty! Indignation

Answered Pity from her cave ;
Death grew pale within the grave,
And Desolation howled to the destroyer, Save !
When like heaven's sun girt by the exhalation
Of its own glorious light, thou didst arise,
Chasing thy foes from nation unto nation
Like shadows : as if day had cloven the skies
At dreaming midnight o'er the western wave,
Men started, staggering with a glad surprise,
Under the lightnings of thine unfamiliar eyes.

XII.

Thou heaven of earth ! what spells could pall thee then,
In ominous eclipse ? a thousand years
Bred from the slime of deep oppression's den,
Dyed all thy liquid light with blood and tears,
Till thy sweet stars could weep the stain away ;
How like Bacchanals of blood
Round France, the ghastly vintage, stood
Destruction's sceptred slaves, and Folly's mitred brood !
When one, like them, but mightier far than they,
The Anarch of thine own bewildered powers
Rose : armies mingled in obscure array,
Like clouds with clouds, darkening the sacred bowers
Of serene heaven. He, by the past pursued,
Rests with those dead, but unforgotten hours,
Whose ghosts scare victor kings in their ancestral towers.

XIII.

England yet sleeps: was she not called of old?
Spain calls her now, as with its thrilling thunder
Vesuvius wakens Ætna, and the cold
Snow-crags by its reply are cloven in sunder:
O'er the lit waves every Æolian isle
From Pithecusa to Pelorus
Howls, and leaps, and glares in chorus:
They cry, Be dim; ye lamps of heaven suspended o'er us.
Her chains are threads of gold, she need but smile
And they dissolve; but Spain's were links of steel,
Till bit to dust by virtue's keenest file.
Twins of a single destiny! appeal
To the eternal years enthroned before us,
In the dim West; impress us from a seal,
All ye have thought and done! Time cannot dare
conceal.

XIV.

Tomb of Arminius! render up thy dead,
Till, like a standard from a watch-tower's staff,
His soul may stream over the tyrant's head;
Thy victory shall be his epitaph,
Wild Bacchanal of truth's mysterious wine,
King-deluded Germany,
His dead spirit lives in thee.
Why do we fear or hope? thou art already free!

And thou, lost Paradise of this divine
And glorious world! thou flowery wilderness!
Thou island of eternity! thou shrine
Where desolation clothed with loveliness
Worships the thing thou wert! O Italy,
Gather thy blood into thy heart; repress
The beasts who make their dens thy sacred palaces.

XV.

O, that the free would stamp the impious name
Of King into the dust! or write it there,
So that this blot upon the page of fame
Were as a serpent's path, which the light air
Erases, and the flat sands close behind!
Ye the oracle have heard:
Lift the victory-flashing sword,
And cut the snaky knots of this foul gordian word,
Which weak itself as stubble, yet can bind
Into a mass, irrefragably firm,
The axes and the rods which awe mankind;
The sound has poison in it, 'tis the sperm
Of what makes life foul, cankerous, and abhorred;
Disdain not thou, at thine appointed term,
To set thine armèd heel on this reluctant worm.

XVI.

O, that the wise from their bright minds would kindle
Such lamps within the dome of this dim world,

That the pale name of Priest might shrink and dwindle
Into the hell from which it first was hurled,
A scoff of impious pride from fiends impure ;
Till human thoughts might kneel alone
Each before the judgment-throne
Of its own aweless soul, or of the power unknown !
O, that the words which make the thoughts obscure
From which they spring, as clouds of glimmering dew
From a white lake blot heaven's blue portraiture,
Were stript of their thin masks and various hue
And frowns and smiles and splendours not their own,
Till in the nakedness of false and true
They stand before their Lord, each to receive its due.

XVII.

He who taught man to vanquish whatsoever
Can be between the cradle and the grave
Crowned him the King of Life. O vain endeavour !
If on his own high will a willing slave,
He has enthroned the oppression and the oppressor.
What if earth can clothe and feed
Amplest millions at their need,
And power in thought be as the tree within the seed ?
O, what if Art, an ardent intercessor,
Driving on fiery wings to Nature's throne,
Checks the great mother stooping to caress her,
And cries : Give me, thy child, dominion

Over all height and depth ? if Life can breed
New wants, and wealth from those who toil and groan
Rend of thy gifts and hers a thousand fold for one.

XVIII.

Come Thou, but lead out of the inmost cave
Of man's deep spirit, as the morning-star
Beckons the Sun from the Eoan wave,
Wisdom. I hear the pennons of her car
Self-moving, like cloud charioted by flame ;
Comes she not, and come ye not,
Rulers of eternal thought,
To judge, with solemn truth, life's ill-apportioned lot ?
Blind Love, and equal Justice, and the Fame
Of what has been, the Hope of what will be ?
O, Liberty ! if such could be thy name
Wert thou disjoined from these, or they from thee :
If thine or theirs were treasures to be bought
By blood or tears, have not the wise and free
Wept tears, and blood like tears ? The solemn harmony

XIX.

Paused, and the spirit of that mighty singing
To its abyss was suddenly withdrawn ;
Then, as a wild swan, when sublimely winging
Its path athwart the thunder-smoke of dawn,

Sinks headlong through the aërial golden light
On the heavy sounding plain,
When the bolt has pierced its brain ;
As summer clouds dissolve, unburthened of their rain ;
As a far taper fades with fading night,
As a brief insect dies with dying day,
My song, its pinions disarrayed of might,
Drooped ; o'er it closed the echoes far away
Of the great voice which did its flight sustain,
As waves which lately paved his watery way
Hiss round a drowner's head in their tempestuous play.

TO NAPLES.

SHELLEY.

Written in 1820, *on hearing of the proclamation of a constitutional government in Naples. The two first stanzas refer to Shelley's then recent visits to Pompeii and to Baiæ. The ode first appeared in the "Posthumous Poems" of* 1824.

I.

I STOOD within the city disinterred;
And heard the autumnal leaves like light footfalls
Of spirits passing through the streets; and heard
The Mountain's slumberous voice at intervals
Thrill through those roofless halls;
The oracular thunder penetrating shook
The listening soul in my suspended blood;
I felt that Earth out of her deep heart spoke—
I felt, but heard not:—through white columns glowed
The isle-sustaining Ocean-flood,
A plane of light between two Heavens of azure:
Around me gleamed many a bright sepulchre
Of whose pure beauty, Time, as if his pleasure
Were to spare Death, had never made erasure;
But every living lineament was clear
As in the sculptor's thought; and there
The wreaths of stony myrtle, ivy and pine,

Like winter leaves o'ergrown by moulded snow
Seemed only not to move and grow
Because the crystal silence of the air
Weighed on their life; even as the Power divine
Which then lulled all things, brooded upon mine.

II.

Then gentle winds arose
With many a mingled close
Of wild Æolian sound and mountain-odour keen;
And where the Baian ocean
Welters with airlike motion,
Within, above, around its bowers of starry green,
Moving the sea-flowers in those purple caves
Even as the ever stormless atmosphere
Floats o'er the Elysian realm,
It bore me like an Angel, o'er the waves
Of sunlight, whose swift pinnace of dewy air
No storm can overwhelm;
I sailed, where ever flows
Under the calm Serene
A spirit of deep emotion
From the unknown graves
Of the dead kings of Melody.
Shadowy Aornos darkened o'er the helm
The horizontal æther; heaven stript bare

Its depths over Elysium, where the prow
Made the invisible water white as snow;
From that Typhæan mount, Inarime,
There streamed a sunlight vapour, like the standard
Of some æthereal host;
Whilst from all the coast,
Louder and louder, gathering round, there wandered
Over the oracular woods and divine sea
Prophesyings which grew articulate—
They seize me—I must speak them—be they fate!

III.

Naples! thou Heart of men which ever pantest
Naked, beneath the lidless eye of heaven!
Elysian City which to calm inchantest
The mutinous air and sea: they round thee, even
As sleep round Love, are driven!
Metropolis of a ruined Paradise
Long lost, late won, and yet but half regained!
Bright Altar of the bloodless sacrifice,
Which armèd Victory offers up unstained
To Love, the flower-enchained!
Thou which wert once, and then didst cease to be,
Now art, and henceforth ever shalt be, free,
If Hope, and Truth, and Justice can avail,
Hail, hail, all hail!

IV.

Thou youngest giant birth
Which from the groaning earth
Leap'st, clothed in armour of impenetrable scale!
Last of the Intercessors!
Who 'gainst the Crowned Transgressors
Pleadest before God's love! Arrayed in Wisdom's mail,
Wave thy lightning lance in mirth
Nor let thy high heart fail,
Though from their hundred gates the leagued Oppressors,
With hurried legions move!
Hail, hail, all hail!

V.

What though Cimmerian Anarchs dare blaspheme
Freedom and thee? thy shield is as a mirror
To make their blind slaves see, and with fierce gleam
To turn his hungry sword upon the wearer;
A new Actæon's error
Shall their's have been—devoured by their own hounds!
Be thou like the imperial Basilisk
Killing thy foe with unapparent wounds!
Gaze on oppression, till at that dread risk
Aghast she pass from the Earth's disk:
Fear not, but gaze—for freemen mightier grow,
And slaves more feeble, gazing on their foe;

If Hope and Truth and Justice may avail,
Thou shalt be great—All hail!

VI.

From Freedom's form divine,
From Nature's inmost shrine,
Strip every impious gawd, rend Error veil by veil:
O'er Ruin desolate,
O'er Falsehood's fallen state,
Sit thou sublime, unawed; be the Destroyer pale!
And equal laws be thine,
And wingèd words let sail,
Freighted with truth even from the throne of God:
That wealth, surviving fate,
Be thine.—All hail!

VII.

Didst thou not start to hear Spain's thrilling pæan
From land to land re-echoed solemnly,
Till silence became music? From the Ææan
To the cold Alps, eternal Italy
Starts to hear thine! The Sea
Which paves the desert streets of Venice laughs
In light and music; widowed Genoa wan
By moonlight spells ancestral epitaphs,
Murmuring, where is Doria? fair Milan,
Within whose veins long ran

The viper's palsying venom, lifts her heel
To bruise his head. The signal and the seal
(If Hope and Truth and Justice can avail)
Art Thou of all these hopes.—O hail!

VIII.

Florence! beneath the sun,
Of cities fairest one,
Blushes within her bower for Freedom's expectation:
From eyes of quenchless hope
Rome tears the priestly cope,
As ruling once by power, so now by admiration,
As athlete stript to run
From a remoter station
For the high prize lost on Philippi's shore:—
As then Hope, Truth, and Justice did avail,
So now may Fraud and Wrong! O hail!

IX.

Hear ye the march as of the Earth-born Forms
Arrayed against the ever-living Gods?
The crash and darkness of a thousand storms
Bursting their inaccessible abodes
Of crags and thunder-clouds?
See ye the banners blazoned to the day,
Inwrought with emblems of barbaric pride?
Dissonant threats kill Silence far away,

The serene Heaven which wraps our Eden wide
With iron light is dyed,
The Anarchs of the North lead forth their legions
Like Chaos o'er creation, uncreating;
An hundred tribes nourished on strange religions
And lawless slaveries,—down the aërial regions
Of the white Alps, desolating,
Famished wolves that bide no waiting,
Blotting the glowing footsteps of old glory,
Trampling our columned cities into dust,
Their dull and savage lust
On Beauty's corse to sickness satiating—
They come! The fields they tread look black and hoary
With fire—from their red feet the streams run gory!

X.

Great Spirit, deepest Love!
Which rulest and dost move
All things which live and are, within the Italian shore;
Who spreadest heaven around it,
Whose woods, rocks, waves, surround it;
Who sittest in thy star, o'er Ocean's western floor,
Spirit of beauty! at whose soft command
The sunbeams and the showers distil its foison
From the Earth's bosom chill;
O bid those beams be each a blinding brand
Of lightning! bid those showers be dews of poison!

Bid the Earth's plenty kill!
Bid thy bright Heaven above,
Whilst light and darkness bound it,
Be their tomb who planned
To make it ours and thine!
Or, with thine harmonizing ardours fill
And raise thy sons, as o'er the prone horizon
Thy lamp feeds every twilight wave with fire—
Be man's high hope and unextinct desire,
The instrument to work thy will divine!
Then clouds from sunbeams, antelopes from leopards,
And frowns and fears from Thee,
Would not more swiftly flee
Than Celtic wolves from the Ausonian shepherds.—
Whatever, Spirit, from thy starry shrine
Thou yieldest or withholdest, Oh let be
This city of thy worship ever free!

TO A NIGHTINGALE.

Lord Houghton says: "In the spring of 1819, *a nightingale built her nest next Mr. Brown's house. Keats took great pleasure in her song, and one morning took his chair from the breakfast-table to the grass-plot under a plum-tree, where he remained between two and three hours. He then reached the house with some scraps of paper in his hand, which Mr. Brown put together in the form of this Ode."*

KEATS.

MY heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains,
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thy happiness,—
That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth.
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,

With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainèd mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:

Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in fairy lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

ON A GRECIAN URN.

KEATS.

Written in 1819, *and mouthed out to Haydon as the friends crossed Kilburn meadows.*

I.

THOU still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

II.

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone!

Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

III.

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

IV.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea-shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,

Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

V.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou sayest,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

TO PSYCHE.

KEATS.

This ode belongs to April, 1819, and was sent to Keats's brother George in America.

O GODDESS! hear these tuneless numbers, wrung
By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear,
And pardon that thy secrets should be sung
Even into thine own soft-conchèd ear:
Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see
The wingèd Psyche with awakened eyes?
I wandered in a forest thoughtlessly,
And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,
Saw two fair creatures, couchèd side by side
In deepest grass, beneath the whispering roof
Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where there ran
A brooklet, scarce espied:
'Mid hushed, cool-rooted flowers, fragrant-eyed,
Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,
They lay calm-breathing on the bedded grass:
Their arms embracèd, and their pinions too;
Their lips touched not, but had not bade adieu,
As if disjoinèd by soft-handed slumber,

And ready still past kisses to outnumber
At tender eye-dawn of Aurorean love:
The wingèd boy I knew;
But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove?
His Psyche true!

O latest born and loveliest vision far
Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy!
Fairer than Phœbe's sapphire-regioned star,
Or Vesper, amorous glowworm of the sky;
Fairer than these, though temple thou hast none,
Nor altar heaped with flowers;
Nor virgin-choir to make delicious moan
Upon the midnight hours;
No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense sweet
From chain-swung censer teeming;
No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat
Of pale-mouthed prophet dreaming.
O brightest! though too late for antique vows,
Too, too late for the fond believing lyre,
When holy were the haunted forest-boughs,
Holy the air, the water, and the fire;
Yet even in these days so far retired
From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,
Fluttering among the faint Olympians,
I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired.
So let me be thy choir, and make a moan

Upon the midnight hours;
Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense sweet
From swingèd censer teeming;
Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy heat
Of pale-mouthed prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane
In some untrodden region of my mind,
Where branchèd thoughts, new grown with pleasant pain,
Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind:
Far, far around shall those dark clustered trees,
Fledge the wild-ridged mountains steep by steep;
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lulled to sleep;
And in the midst of this wide quietness
A rosy sanctuary will I dress
With the wreathed trellis of a working brain,
With buds, and bells, and stars without a name,
With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,
Who breeding flowers, will never breed the same;
And there shall be for thee all soft delight
That shadowy thought can win,
A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,
To let the warm Love in!

TO AUTUMN.

KEATS. *Written in* 1819.

I.

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'erbrimmed their clammy cells.

II.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,

Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twinèd flowers:
And sometime like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

III.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

MELANCHOLY.

KEATS.

Written in September 1819, *and published, with the four preceding odes, in the volume of* 1820.

I.

NO, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine;
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kissed
By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine;
Make not your rosary of yew-berries,
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.

II.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,
And hides the green hill in an April shroud;
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,

Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,
Or on the wealth of globèd peonies;
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
Imprison her soft hand, and let her rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.

III.

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die;
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips:
Ay, in the very temple of Delight
Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

TO MEMORY.

TENNYSON.

"Written very early in life," but published in "Poems, chiefly Lyrical," in 1830.

I.

THOU who stealest fire,
From the fountains of the past,
To glorify the present; oh, haste,
Visit my low desire!
Strengthen me, enlighten me!
I faint in this obscurity,
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

II.

Come not as thou camest of late,
Flinging the gloom of yesternight
On the white day; but robed in soften'd light
Of orient state.
Whilome thou camest with the morning mist,
Even as a maid, whose stately brow
The dew-impearled winds of dawn have kiss'd,
When she, as thou,

Stays on her floating locks the lovely freight
Of overflowing blooms, and earliest shoots
Of orient green, giving safe pledge of fruits,
Which in wintertide shall star
The black earth with brilliance rare.

III.

Whilome thou camest with the morning mist,
And with the evening cloud,
Showering thy gleaned wealth into my open breast
(Those peerless flowers which in the rudest wind
Never grow sere,
When rooted in the garden of the mind,
Because they are the earliest of the year).
Nor was the night thy shroud.
In sweet dreams softer than unbroken rest
Thou leddest by the hand thine infant Hope.
The eddying of her garments caught from thee
The light of thy great presence; and the cope
Of the half-attain'd futurity,
Tho' deep not fathomless,
Was cloven with the million stars which tremble
O'er the deep mind of dauntless infancy.
Small thought was there of life's distress;
For sure she deem'd no mist of earth could
dull
Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and beautiful:

Sure she was nigher to heaven's spheres,
Listening the lordly music flowing from
The illimitable years.
O strengthen me, enlighten me!
I faint in this obscurity,
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,
Thou of the many tongues, the myriad eyes!
Thou comest not with shows of flaunting vines
Unto mine inner eye,
Divinest Memory!
Thou wert not nursed by the waterfall
Which ever sounds and shines
A pillar of white light upon the wall
Of purple cliffs, aloof descried:
Come from the woods that belt the gray hill-side,
The seven elms, the poplars four
That stand beside my father's door,
And chiefly from the brook that loves
To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed sand,
Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,
Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,
In every elbow and turn,
The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland.
O! hither lead thy feet!

Pour round mine ears the livelong bleat
Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wattled folds,
Upon the ridged wolds,
When the first matin-song hath waken'd loud
Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,
What time the amber morn
Forth gushes from beneath a low-hung cloud.

V.

Large dowries doth the raptured eye
To the young spirit present
When first she is wed;
And like a bride of old
In triumph led,
With music and sweet showers
Of festal flowers,
Unto the dwelling she must sway.
Well hast thou done, great artist Memory,
In setting round thy first experiment
With royal frame-work of wrought gold;
Needs must thou dearly love thy first essay,
And foremost in thy various gallery
Place it, where sweetest sunlight falls
Upon the storied walls;
For the discovery
And newness of thine art so pleased thee,
That all which thou hast drawn of fairest

Or boldest since, but lightly weighs
With thee unto the love thou bearest
The first-born of thy genius. Artist-like,
Ever retiring thou dost gaze
On the prime labour of thine early days:
No matter what the sketch might be;
Whether the high field on the bushless Pike,
Or even a sand-built ridge
Of heaped hills that mound the sea,
Overblown with murmurs harsh,
Or even a lowly cottage whence we see
Stretch'd wide and wild the waste enormous marsh,
Where from the frequent bridge,
Like emblems of infinity,
The trenched waters run from sky to sky;
Or a garden bower'd close
With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,
Long alleys falling down to twilight grots,
Or opening upon level plots
Of crowned lilies, standing near
Purple-spiked lavender:
Whither in after life retired
From brawling storms,
From weary wind,
With youthful fancy re-inspired,
We may hold converse with all forms
Of the many-sided mind,

And those whom passion hath not blinded,
Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.

My friend, with you to live alone,
Were how much better than to own
A crown, a sceptre, and a throne!
O strengthen me, enlighten me!
I faint in this obscurity,
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

ENNYSON.

Published alone, as a pamphlet, on the day of the Duke's funeral in 1852; *but very considerably altered, and appended to "Maud," in* 1855.

I.

BURY the Great Duke
With an empire's lamentation,
Let us bury the Great Duke
To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation,
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II.

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III.

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,

Let the long long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV.

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the Past.
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute:
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!

Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

V.

All is over and done:
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd:
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds:
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be toll'd:
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd
Thro' the dome of the golden cross;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;
He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime

His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom:
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame;
With those deep voices our dead captain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?
Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes;

For this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea;
His foes were thine; he kept us free;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee;
For this is England's greatest son,
He that gain'd a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye
Clash'd with his fiery few and won;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew
The treble works, the vast designs
Of his labour'd rampart-lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,
Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
Follow'd up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamour of men,

Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings;
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down;
A day of onsets of despair!
Dash'd on every rocky square
Their surging charges foam'd themselves away;
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;
Thro' the long-tormented air
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept and charged and overthrew.
So great a soldier taught us there,
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
If aught of things that here befall
Touch a spirit among things divine,
If love of country move thee there at all,
Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!
And thro' the centuries let a people's voice

In full acclaim,
A people's voice,
The proof and echo of all human fame,
A people's voice, when they rejoice
At civic revel and pomp and game,
Attest their great commander's claim
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name.

VII.

A people's voice! we are a people yet.
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers;
Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,
We have a voice, with which to pay the debt
Of boundless love and reverence and regret
To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
And keep it ours, O God, from brute control;
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
And save the one true seed of freedom sown
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
That sober freedom out of which there springs
Our loyal passion for our temperate kings;
For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,

And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
But wink no more in slothful overtrust.
Remember him who led your hosts;
He bad you guard the sacred coasts.
Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall;
His voice is silent in your council-hall
For ever; and whatever tempests lour
For ever silent; even if they broke
In thunder, silent; yet remember all
He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke;
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power;
Who let the turbid streams of rumour flow
Thro' either babbling world of high and low;
Whose life was work, whose language rife
With rugged maxims hewn from life;
Who never spoke against a foe;
Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
All great self-seekers trampling on the right:
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;
Truth-lover was our English Duke;
Whatever record leap to light
He never shall be shamed.

VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
He, on whom from both her open hands
Lavish Honour shower'd all her stars,
And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great,
But as he saves or serves the state.
Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outredden
All voluptuous garden-roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.

Such was he: his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure:
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory:
And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illumined cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name.

IX.

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue
Far on in summers that we shall not see:
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung:
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
Ours the pain, be his the gain!
More than is of man's degree

Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.
Whom we see not we revere;
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane:
We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will;
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul?
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears:
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears:
The black earth yawns: the mortal disappears;

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
He is gone who seem'd so great.—
Gone; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him.
God accept him, Christ receive him.

TO THE UNKNOWN EROS.

PATMORE. *Published, in a volume of thirty-one odes, in* 1877.

WHAT rumour'd heavens are these
Which not a poet sings,
O Unknown Eros? What this breeze
Of sudden wings
Speeding at far returns of time from interstellar space
To fan my very face,
And gone as fleet,
Through delicatest ether feathering soft their solitary beat,
With ne'er a light plume dropp'd, nor any trace
To speak of whence they came, or whither they depart?
And why this palpitating heart,
This blind and unrelated joy,
This meaningless desire,
That moves me like the Child
Who in the flushing darkness troubled lies,
Inventing lonely prophecies,
Which even to his Mother mild

He dares not tell;
To which himself is infidel;
His heart not less on fire
With dreams impossible as wildest Arab Tale,
(So thinks the boy,)
With dreams that turn him red and pale,
Yet less impossible and wild
Than those which bashful Love, in his own way and hour,
Shall duly bring to flower!
O Unknown Eros, sire of awful bliss,
What portent and what Delphic word,
Such as in form of snake forbodes the bird,
Is this?
In me life's even flood
What eddies thus?
What in its ruddy orbit lifts the blood
Like a perturbed moon of Uranus
Reaching to some great world in ungauged darkness hid;
And whence
This rapture of the sense
Which, by thy whisper bid,
Reveres with obscure rite and sacramental sign
A bond I know not of nor dimly can divine;
This subject loyalty which longs
For chains and thongs
Woven of gossamer and adamant,
To bind me to my unguessed want,

And so to lie,
Between those quivering plumes that thro' fine ether pant,
For hopeless, sweet eternity?
What God unhonour'd hitherto in songs,
Or which, that now
Forgettest the disguise
That Gods must wear who visit human eyes,
Art Thou?
Thou art not Amor; or, if so, yon pyre,
That waits the willing victim, flames with vestal fire;
Nor mooned Queen of maids; or, if thou'rt she,
Ah, then, from Thee
Let Bride and Bridegroom learn what kisses be!
In what veiled hymn
Or mystic dance
Would he that were thy Priest advance
Thine earthly praise, thy glory limn?
Say, should the feet that feel thy thought
In double-centr'd circuit run;
In that compulsive focus, Nought,
In this a furnace like the sun?
And might some note of thy renown
And high behest
Thus in enigma be exprest:
"There lies the crown
Which all thy longing cures.
Refuse it, Mortal, that it may be yours!

It is a Spirit, though it seems red gold;
And such may no man, but by shunning, hold.
Refuse it, though refusing be despair,
And thou shalt feel the phantom in thy hair."

TO VICTOR HUGO IN EXILE.

SWINBURNE.

At the author's desire, this ode, which occurs in the "Poems and Ballads" of 1866, *appears for the first time with the additional words "in exile." Mr. Swinburne tells me that it was written in* 1865.

IN the fair days when God
By man as godlike trod,
And each alike was Greek, alike was free,
God's lightning spared, they said,
Alone the happier head
Whose laurels screened it; fruitless grace for thee,
To whom the high gods gave of right
Their thunders and their laurels and their light.

Sunbeams and bays before
Our Master's servants wore,
For these Apollo left in all men's lands;
But far from these ere now,
And watched with jealous brow,
Lay the blind lightnings shut between God's hands,
And only loosed on slaves and kings
The terror of the tempest of their wings.

Born in those younger years
That shone with storms of spears
And shook in the wind blown from a dead world's pyre,
When by her back-blown hair
Napoleon caught the fair
And fierce Republic with her feet of fire,
And stayed with iron words and hands
Her flight, and freedom in a thousand lands:

Thou sawest the tides of things
Close over heads of kings,
And thine hand felt the thunder, and to thee
Laurels and lightnings were
As sunbeams and soft air
Mixed each in other, or as mist with sea
Mixed, or as memory with desire,
Or the lute's pulses with the louder lyre.

For Thee man's spirit stood
Disrobed of flesh and blood,
And bare the heart of the most secret hours;
And to thine hand more tame
Than birds in winter came
High hopes and unknown flying forms of powers,
And from thy table fed, and sang
Till with the tune men's ears took fire and rang.

Even all men's eyes and ears
With fiery sound and tears
Waxed hot, and cheeks caught flame and eyelids light,
At those high songs of thine
That stung the sense like wine,
Or fell more soft than dew or snow by night.
Or wailed as in some flooded cave
Sobs the strong broken spirit of a wave.

But we, our master, we
Whose hearts, uplift to thee,
Ache with the pulse of thy remembered song,
We ask not nor await
From the clenched hands of Fate,
As thou, remission of the world's old wrong;
Respite we ask not, nor release;
Freedom a man may have, he shall not peace.

Though thy most fiery hope
Storm heaven, to set wide ope
The all-sought-for gate whence God or Chance debars
All feet of men, all eyes—
The old night resumes her skies,
Her hollow hiding-place of clouds and stars,
Where nought save these is sure in sight
And, paven with death, our days are roofed with night.

One thing we can; to be
Awhile, as men may, free;
But not by hope or pleasure the most stern
Goddess, most awful-eyed
Sits, but on either side
Sits sorrow and the wrath of hearts that burn,
Sad faith that cannot hope or fear,
And memory grey with many a flowerless year.

Not that in stranger's wise
I lift not loving eyes
To the fair foster-mother France, that gave
Beyond the pale fleet foam
Help to my sires and home,
Whose great sweet breast could shelter those and save
Whom from her nursing breasts and hands
Their land cast forth of old on gentler lands.

Not without thoughts that ache
For theirs and for thy sake,
I, born of exiles, hail thy banished head,
I whose young song took flight
Toward the great heat and light
On me a child from thy far splendour shed,
From thine high place of soul and song,
Which, fallen on eyes yet feeble, made them strong.

Ah, not with lessening love
For memories born hereof,
I look to that sweet mother-land, and see
The old fields and fair full streams,
And skies, but fled like dreams
The feet of freedom and the thought of thee;
And all between the skies and graves
The mirth of mockers and the shame of slaves.

She, killed with noisome air,
Even she! and still so fair,
Who said "Let there be freedom," and there was
Freedom; and as a lance
The fiery eyes of France
Touched the world's sleep and as a sleep made pass
Forth of men's heavier ears and eyes
Smitten with fire and thunder from new skies.

Are they men's friends indeed
Who watch them weep and bleed?
Because thou hast loved us, shall the gods love thee?
Thou, first of men and friend,
Seest thou, even thou, the end?
Thou knowest what hath been, knowest thou what shall be?
Evils may pass and hopes endure;
But Fate is dim, and all the gods obscure.

O nursed in airs apart,
O poet highest of heart,
Hast thou seen time, who hast seen so many things?
Are not the years more wise,
More sad than keenest eyes,
The years with soundless feet and sounding wings?
Passing we hear them not, but past
The clamour of them thrills us, and their blast.

Thou art chief of us, and lord;
Thy song is as a sword
Keen-edged and scented in the blade from flowers;
Thou art lord and king; but we
Lift younger eyes, and see
Less of high hope, less light on wandering hours;
Hours that have borne men down so long,
Seen the right fail, and watched uplift the wrong.

But thine imperial soul,
As years and ruins roll
To the same end, and all things and all dreams
With the same wreck and roar
Drift on the dim same shore,
Still in the bitter foam and brackish streams
Tracks the fresh water-spring to be
And sudden sweeter fountains in the sea.

As once the high God bound
With many a rivet round
Man's Saviour, and with iron nailed him through,
At the wild end of things,
Where even his own bird's wings
Flagged, whence the sea shone like a drop of dew,
From Caucasus beheld below
Past fathoms of unfathomable snow;

So the strong God, the chance
Central of circumstance,
Still shows him exile who will not be slave;
All thy great fame and thee
Girt by the dim strait sea
With multitudinous walls of wandering wave;
Shows us our greatest from his throne
Fate-stricken, and rejected of his own.

Yea, he is strong, thou say'st,
A mystery many-faced,
The wild beasts know him and the wild birds flee;
The blind night sees him, Death
Shrinks beaten at his breath,
And his right hand is heavy on the sea:
We know he hath made us, and is king;
We know not if he care for anything.

Thus much, no more, we know;
He bade what is be so,
Bade light be, and bade night be, one by one;
Bade hope and fear, bade ill
And good redeem and kill,
Till all men be aweary of the sun
And his world burn in its own flame
And bear no witness longer of his name.

Yet though all this be thus,
Be those men praised of us
Who have loved and wrought and sorrowed and not sinned
For fame or fear or gold,
Nor waxed for winter cold,
Nor changed for changes of the worldly wind;
Praised above men of men be these,
Till this one world and work we know shall cease.

Yea, one thing more than this,
We know that one thing is,
The splendour of a spirit without blame,
That not the labouring years
Blind-born, nor any fears,
Nor men nor any gods can tire or tame;
But purer power with fiery breath
Fills, and exalts above the gulfs of death.

Praised above men be thou,
Whose laurel-laden brow,
Made for the morning, droops not in the night;
Praised and beloved, that none
Of all thy great things done
Flies higher than thy most equal spirit's flight;
Praised, that nor doubt nor hope could bend
Earth's loftiest head, found upright to the end.

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